

THE MERMAID SERIES

THOMAS SHADWELL

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY

GEORGE SAINTSBURY



"I lie and dream of your full Mermaid wine."—*Beaumont*.

LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN
NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS



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“ What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid ! heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life.”

Master Francis Beaumont to Ben Jonson.



“ Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern? ”

Keats.





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INTRODUCTION.

BY GEORGE SAINTSBURY.



TO produce some individualising description for each more or less notable man of letters is perhaps what Shadwell's great enemy, and in a sense destroyer, would have called a "Delilah of the imagination" to a critic. But the quest has its uses as well as its dangers: and in the case of our present author it is certainly useful. Thomas Shadwell deserves at least one superlative. He is the most flagrant example which proves the rule that no man is ever written down, except by himself. As far as the actual quarrel, or the actual comparison, between him and his antagonist Dryden is concerned, there is no doubt that he had immeasurably the worst of it, and was justly punished by his worsting in the first instance. But the after-penalty has been, perhaps, heavy beyond justice. No author that I can think of, who combined at once the popularity of Shadwell and his gifts, has so utterly faded out of all knowledge, except a rare and second-hand one, derived for the most part from unfriendly sources. He convinced good judges¹ of his own time that, "hasty" as he was, he had more *vis comica* than any of his contemporaries, except Wycherley. His plays were exceedingly success-

¹ See end-note for Rochester's judgment.

ful.¹ Keen-eyed restorers and students of the past have found in him such a fertile, and in more senses than one genial, treasury of observation that he may claim no small share of the vividness of Macaulay's chapter on the manners of England at the accession of James II., and that Scott, defying chronology but making no mistake about art, borrowed from him much of the most effective imagery of *The Fortunes of Nigel*. Yet he has faded so utterly out of the general memory that he has never been reprinted since 1720 as a whole, or in any considerable part, and that almost the whole general knowledge of him has been drawn from the lampoons, the justly provoked and victorious lampoons, of his bitterest enemy. When, some thirty years ago, the "dramatists of the Restoration" got themselves re-edited, Shadwell, certainly not the least gifted of them, found no place; and, as far as I know, the present volume is the only attempt to give any first-hand knowledge of him, by characteristic selection of his plays, that has ever been made since the appearance of the practically unedited collection of his works, which is now extremely difficult to procure. I am very glad, being a professed servant of Dryden, that it has fallen to my lot to do this service to Dryden's enemy. For Glorious John was a very placable person; and I think any one who made a voyage to Parnassus now would find him prepared to admit that "Og" has suffered enough for daring to blaspheme his betters.

There would be all the more chance of this mercy that Dryden's own judgments have been amply justified by Shadwell's fate. Were it not for the faults so ruthlessly pointed out in *Macflecknoe* and in the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, the author of *Bury Fair* might long ago have sued out a writ of ease from his sentence. But it remains absolutely true that he could "do anything but write." He had a much greater com-

¹ Pepys (*v. inf.*), who at first thought very badly of *The Sullen Lovers*, was converted by its popularity.

mand of comic incident and situation, and a much sharper eye for a play, than Dryden himself. Without anything like the wit of Wycherley, he had much more direct power of dramatic observation of actual life; being in this respect, as it seems to me, almost, if not quite, the equal of Farquhar. Although he chose to parade his adhesion to the school of Jonson in his prefaces (wherein he was as conspicuously unlucky as Dryden was successful), I am by no means able to acquiesce in the judgment which gives to Etherege and not to him the fatherhood of the seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century comedy of manners. He seems indeed born for one of the collaborations so frequent in dramatic history. A collaborator who could have put into terse, witty, and scholarly English Shadwell's exuberant stock of situations, and his accurate observation of manners, would probably have made of the joint work one of the capital things of English literature. Even short of this, one who could have applied to the work as it stands a ruthless and judicious exercise of the shears and the file might have enormously improved it. As it is, it is a congeries of all the worst faults of the time, redeemed only by merits which are sadly tarnished and mouldered by the effect of the faults themselves. Of no one of the plays which I am about to set before the reader can I venture to say that it is good as a whole; and I do not remember to have ever had more difficult work than the selection of plays which might display Shadwell's characteristics in sufficient fulness without the danger of utterly disgusting the reader. One can pardon desultoriness, dulness, coarseness, want of critical power, tediousness, ineptitude, when any of these amiable qualities appears by itself, or with any reasonable selection of its fellows. But when they all appear

~~together it is rather true that it can be met here~~

a writer at all? But the answer is not difficult. In the first place, no collection of British dramatists could possibly be complete without a man so famous in his own day as Shadwell—a man whom Rochester thought worthy of his least grudging praise, and Dryden of his sharpest steel of censure. In the second, every competent judge agrees, and I certainly endorse the verdict, that in the two great dramatic qualities of observation of manners and command of *technique* of a certain type, Shadwell stands not only not low but rather high among English dramatists. If it had only not been for the fatal fairy that said “Do anything but *write*” while qualifying him for a profession which, by self or sufficient deputy such as he never had, necessitates writing!

Not much is recorded of the private life of Shadwell. That he was a gentleman of a good family, still worthily represented, is beyond question, and the “account” of his life which prefaces his Works boasts, with rather double-edged eagerness, that the elder or Staffordshire branch of the Shadwells had, already, two centuries ago, enjoyed an estate of five hundred pounds per annum for above three hundred years, *without any honours or public business*. Shadwell’s immediate forbears, however, were seated not in Staffordshire, but in Norfolk, at Stanton Hall, near Brandon, where he was born in 1640.¹ As in most such accounts, there is some obscurity about the circumstances of the family. Shadwell’s father, who was educated at Caius College, Cambridge, and at the Middle Temple, is said to have been a justice of peace for three counties, to have had a large fortune left him by an uncle, and, though his means dispensed him from the practice of his profession, the law, to have held the offices of Recorder of Galway, Receiver of some of the Duke of York’s property, and

ment does not sound prosperous, and it is asserted that he, being a stout Royalist, had lost much in the Commonwealth time. However this may be, something of the same contradiction, or unsolved difference, occurs in the accounts of the dramatist's own fortune. He was, like his father, liberally educated at the same College and Inn; he is said to have travelled, and easily if not "hastily" as he wrote, the number of his plays, spread as they are over four and twenty years, is not such as could have sustained him in comfort without some private fortune. But Anne Shadwell, his widow,¹ declares, in her dedication to his unfinished piece, *The Volunteers*, that the best part of her sustenance and her family's was gone when Shadwell ceased to write. He himself acknowledges great obligations to the Duke of Newcastle, and is not likely to have been forbidden by any scruples of delicacy to accept solid favours from the Duke or any other patron. In the last years of Charles and during the reign of James he was of course under a cloud, but after he became the chief literary bravo of the Protestant Party he doubtless was able to draw upon it. His main reward, however—the dearest to vanity, if not the most splendid in kind that any literary man ever had—the reversion of Dryden's offices when Dryden was deprived of them, he enjoyed for but a very short time, dying (perhaps of an overdose of opium) on November 19, 1692, at the age of fifty-two. His son, Sir John Shadwell, was a physician of repute; Charles Shadwell, a dramatist of the next generation (of whose work the best known to me, and, I believe, the best, is *The Fair Quaker of Deal*, a nautical drama, showing a good deal of the elder Shadwell's command of manners) is loosely spoken of as a son (so *Dict. Nat. Biog.*), a nephew, or perhaps some other relation to Thomas. The community of profession is interesting: and the fact that Charles lived and had most of his plays performed in

Ireland may perhaps have something, though exactly what cannot be said, to do with that attribution or supposed attribution of Hibernian origin to Thomas himself, which is asserted by tradition to have been the thing he minded most in *Macflecknoe*. Nor should it be forgotten, in relation to this, that his father, as I have said, is described as Recorder of an Irish town.

The brutality assigned to "Og" is no doubt intentionally overdone. But there were stories that Shadwell carried out his imitation and admiration of Ben Jonson to the length of adopting Ben's somewhat over-convivial habits. Also he is said to have taken opium "to raise his imagination," of which all that can be said is that if the cause is not more certain than the effect is visible, it is a very idle story. Even the significant encomiums of his biographer, that he had not only "a true sense of honour and morality, but, *particularly in his latter days*, of religion," may be thought to show that religiosity was not, in the days which were not latter, his chief characteristic. It is fair to say, however, that no very damning evidence exists against Shadwell's general character. Dryden, an unerring selector of the really weak and avoider of the strong points of his victims, stigmatises him as dull, disloyal, coarsely convivial, but not as vicious; and he figures in none of the scandalous legends of the day. He must at some time or other have changed from Toryism to Whiggery: but having taken this side, he stuck to it firmly in dangerous times, and seems to have deserved the dubious compliment of being recommended to William by Dorset as "the honestest man, if not the best poet." Indeed, a sweeping objection to Popery and wooden shoes is about the extent of political and religious conviction which could be expected from Shadwell's very English, but not very acute, understanding.

The most famous argument against his life is that he was

the lesser poet carried off the triumph of laughing last, politically speaking, inflicted, as has been said, upon him in the long run something like literary annihilation as a writer, though at the same time it gave him a very unenviable immortality as a butt. As the particulars of it are accessible in many common books about Dryden, and as other particulars about Shadwell and his work are hardly accessible anywhere, I do not think that it will be necessary to do more than give a rapid summary and to pass on to the work itself.

This famous and bitter enmity was one of the instances of the proverb about estranged friends. Shadwell and Dryden, though there are one or two rather acid references by innuendo to Dryden in Shadwell's early prefaces, had been associates for a considerable time. They had banded themselves with Crowne to attack Settle's *Empress of Morocco*. The greater poet had given the lesser prologues, and before Dryden distinctly broke with the Protestant party, both had worked the theatre against the Papists. No one has assigned any private cause, unless it may be lurking literary jealousy, for the almost unexampled ribaldry of Shadwell's *Medal of John Bayes*, which, unprovoked by attack from Dryden, was published by its author in 1682 in answer to *The Medal*. In October and November of the very same year Dryden replied with two literally crushing blows. *Macflecknoe*, the most perfect example of what has been called his "Olympian" faculty of satirising an enemy from an immeasurable height, and with a cool good-humour¹ which makes repartee almost impossible, appeared in October. In November followed the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*. Here Dryden contributed the sketch of Shadwell as "Og," which, with those of "Doeg" (Settle), "Judas" (Ferguson), and the less important

¹ The author of the article in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.* thinks Dryden "savagely" and "bitter." This is a question of the use of words,

figures of Forbes, Pordage, and Johnson, forms a gallery of satirical portraits or characters, the weakest of them unapproached in English except by the author's own work in the earlier part, and in a different style, by Pope's "Atticus." With these and a hardly less masterly piece of prose, the *Vindication of the Duke of Guise*, Dryden's easy nature was pretty well content. A few passing sneers, such as the "Tom Sternhold or Tom Shadwell," the phrase about "dulness being fated to the name of Tom," and so forth, occasionally came from his pen, but otherwise he let Shadwell, and could afford to leave him, very much alone. Notwithstanding the crowning affront of the promotion of "Macflecknoe" to the Laureateship, he had himself killed Shadwell's reputation or immortal part. And the mortal part of Og did not survive its laureation very long to prove its gratitude in the festive way referred to by Dryden himself when he acknowledged Shadwell's loyalty in this sense, that "the wine duties rise considerably by his claret."

The plays of Shadwell, as published in his works, are seventeen in number: *The Sullen Lovers*, *The Humorists*, *The Royal Shepherdess*, *The Virtuoso*, *Psyche*, *The Libertine*, *Epsom Wells*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Miser*, *A True Widow*, *The Lancashire Witches*, *The Woman Captain*, *The Squire of Alsatia*, *Bury Fair*, *The Amorous Bigot*, *The Scurvers*, and *The Volunteers*. Of these *The Royal Shepherdess* is not only a tragi-comedy, a style for which Shadwell had not the least aptitude, but is, by his own account, merely a re-handling of the work of "Mr. Fountain of Devonshire," with some humours added. So on the soul of Mr. Fountain of Devonshire let it rest, and the load is heavy enough. *Psyche*, *Timon of Athens*, and *The Miser*, are travesties from Molière and Shakespeare, after the deplorable fashion, not merely of Ravens-

dedication to *Timon*, "I can truly say that I have made it into a play." On the remaining thirteen must rest Shadwell's reputation, such as it is or can be made; and I am bound to confess that it can never be a very high one. Reading a dramatist's complete works over again, with a view to selection for such a volume as this, is a pretty severe no doubt, but also a pretty final test of their value, though there may be two causes of difficulty in the mere selection. It may be difficult to exclude anything because there is good in everything; or it may be difficult to include anything because all is more or less faulty. The hardship in Shadwell's case must, I fear, be admitted to be rather of the latter than the former kind, but it has caused me unusual hesitation in fixing on the four plays which actually appear.

About two of them I had, and indeed could have, little doubt. *Bury Fair* is quite Shadwell's best thing, exhibiting at once his keen eye for contemporary manners, his at least fairly dexterous hand in painting them, and his command of Jonsonian humours, softened a little into something like an anticipation of the Congrevian comedy. It is also unusually free from, or rather less than usually tainted with, his three great sins of coarseness, tediousness, and flatness of dialogue. *The Sullen Lovers*, though partly borrowed, is a piece of merit, and is interesting from its date and from being the author's first. But after these two the difficulty begins. The three last plays appear to have been all written after Shadwell's health was broken, and one of them, *The Amorous Bigot*, seems to have been merely cobbled up to introduce again Teague O'Divelly, the rascally Irish priest of *The Lancashire Witches*, whose humours had amused the gallery, while his villainies pleased good Protestants and Williamites. *The Woman Captain* is less of a genuine contemporary study than of a literary remembrance of Middleton and Fletcher modernised. *The Lancashire Witches* gave me more pause. As a play it created, for

political and ecclesiastical reasons, a great sensation, and Teague was the forerunner of a long line of comic Irishmen. On the other hand, his jargon and that of the Lancashire clowns fills the play to satiety and more; while, to make matters better, Shadwell, acknowledging with great good sense that he "cannot equal Shakespeare's imagination" in his witches, has laboriously stuffed the piece with borrowed erudition from all sorts of witch literature, with justificatory notes to match. Now all this is very long and very tedious. *Epsom Wells* is much better; but it is almost exactly in the line of *Bury Fair*, which again is much the better of the two.

Had there been room I should have given both, for more reasons than one. Here also we have that close, faithful, and therefore amusing and valuable picture of actual life which was Shadwell's forte. Epsom, which had not attained its after-fame as a racing resort for half London during a few days now and then, was on the other hand one of the nearest, most fashionable, and most frequented holiday places of the capital during the greater part of the year. We have a lively account of it from Pepys,¹ only a very few years earlier than Shadwell's play—an account advantaged by all the charm of manner which is unfortunately always lacking to our poor dramatist—and it maintained its vogue until the greater distance, and also it is fair to say the greater beauty, of Tunbridge Wells put it out of fashion. Shadwell has drawn its humours as well as he could, and he drew them well enough to attract the attention of the best critic of the time (with the exception of Dryden himself) in England, or in Europe, the great M. de Saint-Evremond, who, an exile from France, had been good enough to take up his abode amongst us.

* ¹ Pepys knew Shadwell, perhaps gave him dinner on December 30, 1661, certainly sat next him at the theatre on September 19, 1668 (when the "poet" was "big with admiration" of *The Silent Woman*), and gives rather varying judgments of *The Sullen Lovers*.

Saint-Evremond does not say very much about *Epsom Wells*, which had appeared four years, and had been printed a year, before he wrote, in 1677, his remarks on English comedy. But he notes in it, and was quite right in noting, that distinguishing mark of the English comedy, soon to be transferred to the English novel, the faithful representation of actual life, actual manners, in artificial representation. And it is not unamusing to note that this reference seems, contrary to Dryden's wont, to have rather annoyed that usually magnanimous person who, some fifteen years later in his own *Character of Saint-Evremond*, expostulates with him for "transferring those names into his own country which will be forgotten by posterity in ours." Not indeed that Shadwell's name was likely to be forgotten; Dryden himself had taken care of that.

The *Libertine*, again, is a play which demands attention on grounds somewhat similar to those in the case of the *Lancashire Witches*. I do not know whether it was the earliest English version of the great Don Juan legend in drama, but it is certainly the earliest of any note, and it would not appear to be an absolutely slavish copy of either French or Spanish originals. Coleridge (perhaps from a fellow-feeling in opium-eating) has given it interest by quoting from it, and dwelling on it, largely in the *Biographia Literaria*; and those who know his citations (which, especially in the last scene, do not lack point) may wish to see the context. From a memory of reading the play many years ago, I had thought it might do; but reperusal was fatal to it. The fragments quoted by Coleridge exhaust its literary merit, and as a play it is an interminable jumble of crimes that are merely farcical, and horrors which make one yawn rather than shudder. The merits of *The Virtuoso*—an early dramatic satire on the Royal Society and scientific collecting—are not limited to the fact that "Bruce" "Longvil" and the

a not dissimilar piece, has also merits. But both are very similar indeed to *The Sullen Lovers*, and as a representative of this particular vein of Shadwell's that, the first, and *A True Widow*, perhaps the ripest, seem preferable, while *Bury Fair* and *The Squire of Alsatia* can hardly be excelled for his more particular and direct comedy of manners. Lastly *The Scowrers* and *The Volunteers* are by no means the worst of Shadwell's plays, and the latter has been much praised by some. As the title shows, it is one of Shadwell's frequent and neither uninteresting nor unsuccessful attempts to represent the follies of the time with plenty of Jonsonian humours.¹

The two great merits, and the one overpowering defect, of Shadwell's work on these lines I have already glanced at, but they must be discussed somewhat more in detail, and it may be well to get rid of the defect first. It lies, as has been said, in the inability to "write," in the absence of style. The curse, "Be thou dull," was not pronounced with entire, though it was with sufficient, justice upon Shadwell. His humours, though often exaggerated, are also often really humorous, and he can bustle a comedy through in a sufficiently knowing fashion. But there seems to have been in him a strong vein of uncritical simplicity which made him unable, not only to polish a good thing into brilliancy, but even to tell a good thing from a bad one. He was evidently a very self-satisfied person, and the astonishing want of finish and literary quality about his work becomes easily explicable when we read his critical opinions of other men. These are not to be judged from such a casual slip as that quoted above as to

¹ It is perhaps just permissible to remind the reader that in this sense "humour" means a prevailing personal craze or foible, and is not used in the modern sense. On the whole relation of Post- to Pre-Reformation comedy the reader may be referred to the *Mermaid Dryden*. If it had been possible to give two volumes, I should

Timon, for one may pick very astonishing single dicta out of the famous prefaces of Glorious John himself. But it is Shadwell's constant habit to be at the wrong critical standpoint, to fire (as one may say) at the wrong target, to drop some *naïveté* of the kind just quoted, or (and most commonly) to inform the public in the most obliging fashion how he arranged the humours, and added the business, and adjusted this and that, and performed the whole wonder before them. No one who has turned over one of these prefaces—certainly no one who has patiently read them all—can be surprised at the defects of the plays they usher—at the surplusage and the flatness of the dialogue. Shadwell, it is true, besides being flat and garrulous, is also exceedingly coarse. He always professes a moral purpose, and, I believe, really had one; nor is the foulness of his language so much a bait to catch the false taste of the time as a faithful copy of the real habits of that time, exaggerated by corrupt following of his idol Jonson, and by a rough, unrefined nature. Besides, he shares this defect with all his contemporaries, and has less of it than some—for instance, Otway. In his extraordinary want of finish, wit, polish, point, all the qualities which go to make up the proper and classical sense of the word “elegance,” I hardly know whether he has any rival to keep him company. He certainly has none among any writers in any class of literature who can pretend to the possession of anything like his powers in other directions.

For he had powers, and remarkable ones. To say that he first thought of holding up the dramatic mirror to the actual streets and houses of England without colouring the reflection in any conventional fashion, would, of course, be absurd. His master's *Bartholomew Fair*, not to mention scores of other plays of the preceding half of the century, from Middleton's down to

more modern manners represented which make *Epsom Wells* and *Bury Fair* so very different from *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* or the *Sparagus Garden*. Shadwell certainly made an advance (I think myself that he made an advance quite as great as either Wycherley or Etherege) on the giant race before the Flood, in bringing on the stage actual life, and not merely an actual life poetised and romanticised to the level of *Twelfth Night* or *As you Like it*, degraded and coarsened to the level of *Holland's Leaguer*, or *Wit in a Constable*. How far the change was a gain as well as an advance is of course another matter altogether. It is sufficient that it is, in its own direction, an advance, and there is a striking proof of this. No competent judge has ever, without great caution and reserves, assumed that a scene of our elder dramatists represents the actual state of London or England in their time; there is too much evident literary travesty in them, too much of the air and atmosphere of that land which is of art, not of nature. And when men of considerable genius of the purely literary kind take up this very style of Shadwell's, they too become suspect. Even Lord Foppington and Tom Fashion, even Sir Sampson and Ben, smack of the stage and of the study, of that indefinable false quality which Thackeray ridiculed in *London Assurance*, and which the present generation has seen in later plays. With Shadwell himself it is not so. Scott and Macaulay were different persons enough, but each knew a touch of historic nature unerringly when he saw it, and each saw it in Shadwell. With all his skill in some points of the playwright's art, one is constrained to regret that Shadwell did not live to practice the less difficult art of the novelist, where his faculty of accurate observation and transcript would have stood him in excellent stead, and might have enabled him to produce work which

any one turn to the play-scene in *The True Widow*, given hereafter, and judge. It is not at all well written; a dozen playwrights of the time and of that immediately succeeding, would have pointed the speeches better, and made smárter work. But how absolutely *alive* it is! There is nothing like it in the whole dramatic work of Dryden, nothing equal to it, I think, in either Etherege or Wycherley. And even when we come to the higher level of Congreve and Vanbrugh the truth is more psychological, more evolved from a general knowledge of human nature, and less from a patient observation of manners. "What play do they play?" "Some confounded play or other," is almost, if not quite, genius. John Thorp would have said it if he had been one hundred and fifty years older. And in all Shadwell's plays, even the worst, where he allows himself to get into his proper vein at all, there is something of this uncompromising and at the same time felicitous realism. He may sometimes exaggerate out of clumsiness, but he seldom or never is guilty of that conventionality, that mere echoing of the literary or dramatic work of the time, which is so fatal and so common in this class of writing. That he should have been so faithful, with at the same time no mark of having possessed the true humorist eye, is a sign perhaps of deficiency of positive intellect in him. But it is also a sign of an unusual and remarkable natural endowment, which may be called gift if any one is generous, and, if any one is disposed to be ungenerous and belittling, knack.

In addition to this he had, as I have said, no small share of the playwright's gift pure and simple. I speak on this point with more diffidence, having myself no very intimate practical knowledge of, or affection for, purely theatrical matters. But clumsy as the work often is, it appears to me to possess marks which, as I have been assured by better judges than myself are the

be present in a Scribe and absent in a Gautier, but which are just as unmistakable as those which on the other side, the literary side, are present in a Gautier and absent in a Scribe. To discuss what these marks are and how they differ from the general literary characteristics of drama or the characteristics of prose fiction, would be out of place here. It may be sufficient to say that with all Shadwell's prolixity, his clumsiness, his extravagance, I seem to see in him the parts which lend themselves to an actor for effective rendering, the kind of interest of plot which holds an audience without perplexing and troubling it, the solutions and situations which satisfy that audience, the general handling, in short, which argues knowledge of the stage generally, and aptitude for the stage of the time. That stage and those audiences were no doubt very different from our own stages and audiences; and it would probably be impossible without root-and-branch alteration or re-writing to obtain for a play of Shadwell's even that success of esteem which has already been obtained for more than one of his contemporaries; indeed his grave faults, and the passing and unfashionable dress even of his merits, banished him from the stage of generations immediately succeeding his own. But the purely dramatic part of his plays—the theatrical skeleton, so to speak, as distinguished from the literary flesh, and the garments of dialogue, manners, and so forth—would, I believe, commend itself as useful for re-clothing with new flesh and new garments to many a practical adapter of our own day.

This quality gives no doubt a weaker claim upon the attention of posterity (which has its own able playwrights just as it has its own able editors, and may complain as much of being asked to read a mere dramatic "machine" as of being obliged to read an old leading article) than

comes to reinforce and strengthen that other and stronger claim. Nowhere else, especially in the absence, when Pepys' mouth is once closed, of the memoirs and letters which are elsewhere so numerous and so precious, shall we find such life-like pictures of the "very merry, laughing, quaffing, and unthinking time" of Charles the Second. We can have them more brilliantly given in Wycherley and Etherege, framed with greater literary skill in Otway and Dryden: but Shadwell's very absence of imagination, his very bareness of literary gift, makes him faithful and true. Add his playwright's skill; add his fame (if only of that forlorn sort which is a fame of being laughed at not with), and we shall have fully established his claim to a re-presentation, which if it vindicates his remorseless satirist not a little, will also in some measure vindicate himself.

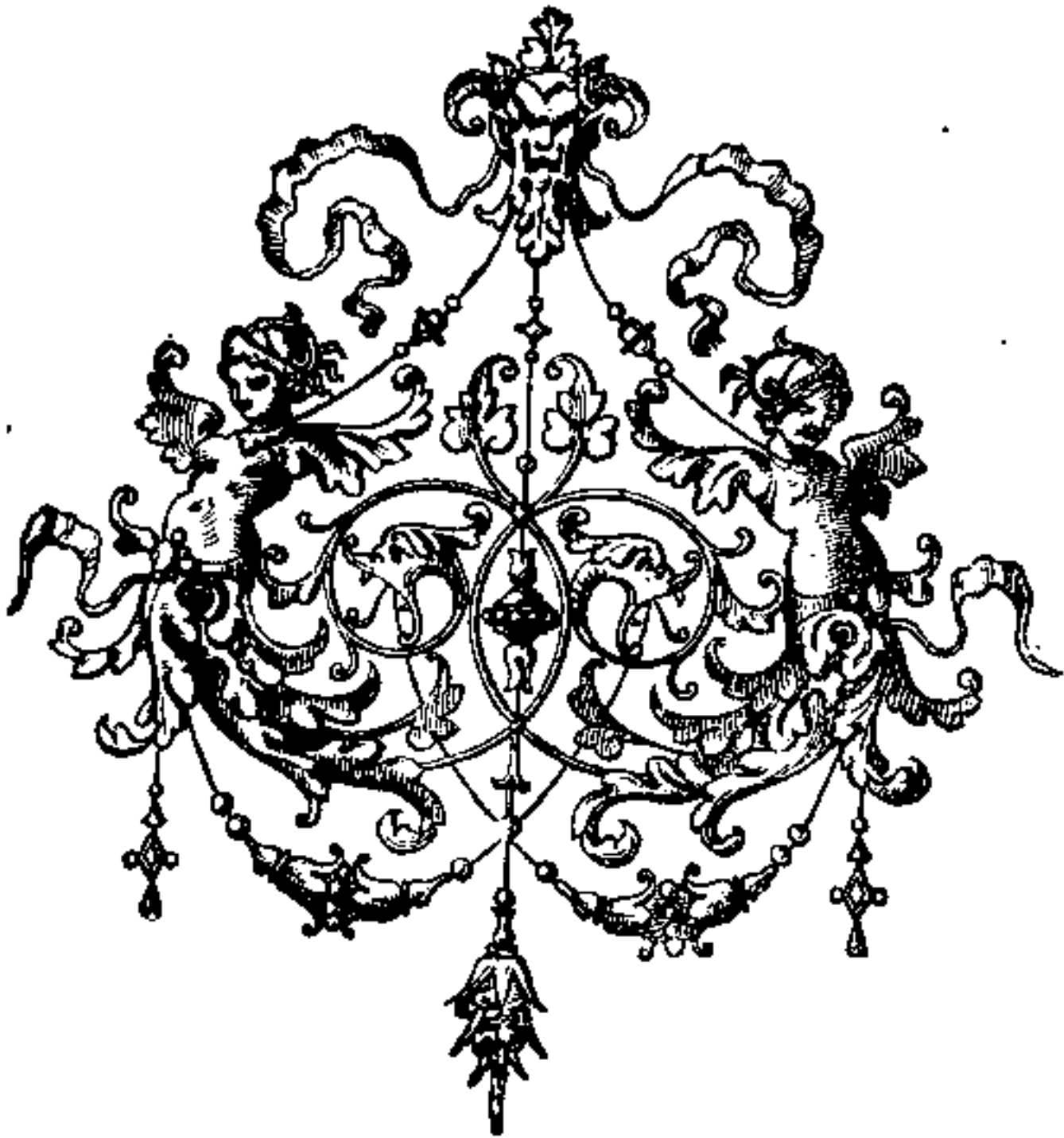
Saint-Evremond's notice of *Epsom Wells* may be found in *De la Comédie Anglaise* at ii. 386 of Giraud's *Œuvres Mêlées de St.-E.* (Paris, 1865). Shadwell is partly praised, partly blamed by Addison (*Spec.*, 35 and 141), who could not let this Whig dog have *all* the worst of it. I am not aware of any extensive critique on him since that in the *Retrospective Review*, xvi. 55-96, which perhaps makes the goose a little too much of a swan, but is mainly occupied with extract, as was not at all improper in the case of an author so hard to get at. The full text of Rochester's verdict on him in his *Allusion to Horace, Sat. X.* is as follows:—

“ Of all our modern wits, none seems to me
Once to have touched upon true comedy,
But hasty Shadwell and slow Wycherley.
Shadwell's unfinished works do yet impart
Great proofs of force of genius, none of art,
With just bold strokes he dashes here and there,
Showing great mastery with little care;
Scorning to varnish his good touches o'er
To make the fools and women praise them more.”

Scott (note on *Macflecknoe*) thought "most of his comedies might be read with pleasure." This moderate and Rochester's immoderate praise must be taken with strict reference to the *matter*. I once

picked up Shadwell's brute nuggets, and wrought and polished them into jewels.

Full annotation on Shadwell would have to be very full indeed ; but such annotation is not of the plan of this series, and I have merely given what seemed indispensable. The text, which is fairly corrupt in the 1720 edition, has been corrected from the first editions where necessary. But it is possible that some of the corruptions may have eluded me, as well as the hand which first adjusted the 1720 text for this issue ; while the first editions themselves are far from well printed. As always, the scene-division is extremely imperfect. In the two last plays I have experimentally amended it : but only by suggestion and not peremptorily.



THE SULLEN LOVERS.





THE SULLEN LOVERS ; OR, THE CURIOUS IMPERTINENTS.



O any one who knows *Les Fâcheux*, and especially to any one who remembers that that very successful and daring satire was performed at a Court whence everything was at once reported to London, some six or seven years before Shadwell's play was produced, the cavalier reference to Molière in the Preface which follows must be rather amusing. The idea, though of course not wholly original in Molière himself, was equally of course, almost wholly due to him, and many details (not merely the backgammon, but the "corrant," the duel, and so forth) are transferred bodily. At the same time Shadwell is as far as possible from being guilty of a mere adaptation. The combination of Stanford and Emilia has no counterpart in the French play; and the lively Jonsonian "humours" of Sir Positive At-all and his fellows are independent enough. The quartette situation of Carolina, Emilia, Stanford, and Lovel no doubt owes something to *Much Ado about Nothing*; and other things of the same kind might be traced. Although Sir Positive's eccentricities are, after Shadwell's fashion, too much multiplied and insisted upon, he is a really comic character, and the whole play has the bustle and "go" which distinguish our author at his best. Indeed, it may be questioned whether he ever did anything better, as a whole, except *Bury Fair*. In the rather pugnacious remarks which the Preface contains on the style of play in vogue, there has been thought, with some reason, to be a hit at Dryden, whose leading comic characters, not merely in *The Wild Gallant*, but in his most successful early play, *The Maiden Queen*, do something smack of Shadwell's scornful description. The poets were afterwards and for years friends; but the end justified the proverb *On*

To the Thrice Noble, High and Puissant

PRINCE WILLIAM,

Duke, Marquis, and Earl of Newcastle, Earl of Ogle, Viscount Mansfield, Baron of Bolsover, of Ogle, of Bertram, Bothall, and Hepple; Gentleman of His Majesty's Bed-Chamber, One of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy-Council, Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, His Majesty's Lieutenant of the County and Town of Nottingham, and Justice in Eyre, Trent, North, &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,



HAD I no particular obligations to urge me, yet my own inclinations would prompt me not only to dedicate this to you, but myself to your Grace's service: since you have so much obliged your country both by your courage, and your wit, that all men, who pretend either to sword or pen, ought to shelter themselves under your Grace's protection. Those excellences, as well as the great obligations I have had the honour to receive from your Grace, are the occasion of this Dedication: and I doubt not, but that generosity, wherewith your Grace has always succoured the afflicted, will make you willing (by suffering me to use the honour of your name) to rescue this from the bloody hands of the critics, who will not dare to use it roughly, when they see your Grace's name in the beginning, that being a stamp sufficient to render it true coin, though it be adulterate. That authority that makes you able, and that great goodness that makes you willing to protect all your servants, may give you frequent troubles of this nature; but I hope your Grace will be pleased to pardon them, when they come from,

My Lord,

Your Grace's

Most obliged humble servant,

THO. SHADWELL.

London, Sept. 1,



PREFACE

READER,



THE success of this Play, as it was much more than it deserved, so was much more than I expected; especially in this very critical age, when every man pretends to be a judge, and some, that never read three Plays in their lives, and never understood one, are as positive in their judgment of Plays, as if they were all Jonsons. But had I been used with all the severity imaginable, I should patiently have submitted to my fate; not like the rejected authors of our time, who, when their Plays are damned, will strut, and huff it out, and laugh at the ignorance of the age: or, like some other of our modern fops, that declare they are resolved to justify their Plays with their swords (though perhaps their courage is as little as their wit), such as peep through their loop-holes in the theatre, to see who looks grum upon their Plays: and if they spy a gentle 'squire making faces, he, poor soul, must be hectored till he likes 'em, while the more stubborn bully-rock ' damns, and is safe; such is their discretion in the choice of their men. Such gentlemen as these, I must confess, had need pretend they cannot err. These will huff, and look big upon the success of an ill Play stuffed full of songs and dances (which have that constraint upon 'em too, that they seldom seem to come in willingly); when in such Plays the composer and the dancing-master are the best poets, and yet the unmerciful scribbler would rob them of all the honour.

I am so far from valuing myself (as the phrase is) upon this Play, that perhaps no man is a severer judge of it than myself; yet if anything could have made me proud of it, it would have been the great favour and countenance it received from His Majesty and their Royal Highnesses.

But I could not persuade myself that they were so favourable to the Play for the merit of it, but out of a princely generosity, to

encourage a young beginner, that did what he could to please them, and that otherwise might have been balked for ever : 'tis to this I owe the success of the Play, and am as far from presumption of my own merits in it, as one ought to be, who receives an aim.

The first hint I received was from the report of a Play of Molière's of three Acts, called *Les Fâcheux*, upon which I wrote a great part of this before I read that ; and after it came to my hands, I found so little for my use (having before upon that hint designed the fittest characters I could for my purpose), and that I have made use of but two short scenes which I inserted afterwards, viz., the first scene in the Second Act between Stanford and Roger, and Molière's story of piquet, which I have translated into backgammon, both of them being so varied you would not know them. But I freely confess my theft, and am ashamed on't, though I have the example of some that never yet wrote Play without stealing most of it ; and (like men that lie so long, till they believe themselves) at length by continual thieving, reckon their stolen goods their own too ; which is so ignoble a thing, that I cannot but believe that he that makes a common practice of stealing other men's wit, would, if he could with the same safety, steal anything else.

I have in this Play, as near as I could, observed the three unities of time, place, and action ; the time of the drama does not exceed six hours, the place is in a very narrow compass, and the main action of the Play, upon which all the rest depend, is the sullen love betwixt Stanford and Emilia, which kind of love is only proper to their characters. I have here, as often as I could naturally, kept the scenes unbroken, which (though it be not so much practised, or so well understood, by the English) yet among the French poets is accounted a great beauty. But after these frivolous excuses, the want of design in the Play has been objected against me ; which fault (though I may endeavour a little to extenuate) I dare not absolutely deny. I conceive, with all submission to better judgments, that no man ought to expect such intrigues in the little actions of comedy, as are required in Plays of a higher nature. But in Plays of humour, where there are so many characters as there are in this, there is yet less design to be expected : for if, after I had formed three or four forward prating fops in the Play, I made it full of plot and business ; at the latter end, where the turns ought to be many, and suddenly following one another, I must have let fall the humour, which I thought would be pleasanter than intrigues could have been without it ; and it would have been easier to me to have made a plot than to hold up the humour.

they blame the unity of the action ; yet Horace, *de Arte Poetica*, says :—

“ Sit quod vis, simplex duntaxat, et unum.”

Or whether it be the carrying on of the humours to the last, which the same author directs me to do.

“ Si quid inexpertum Scenæ committis, et audes
Personam formare novam, servetur ad inum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.”

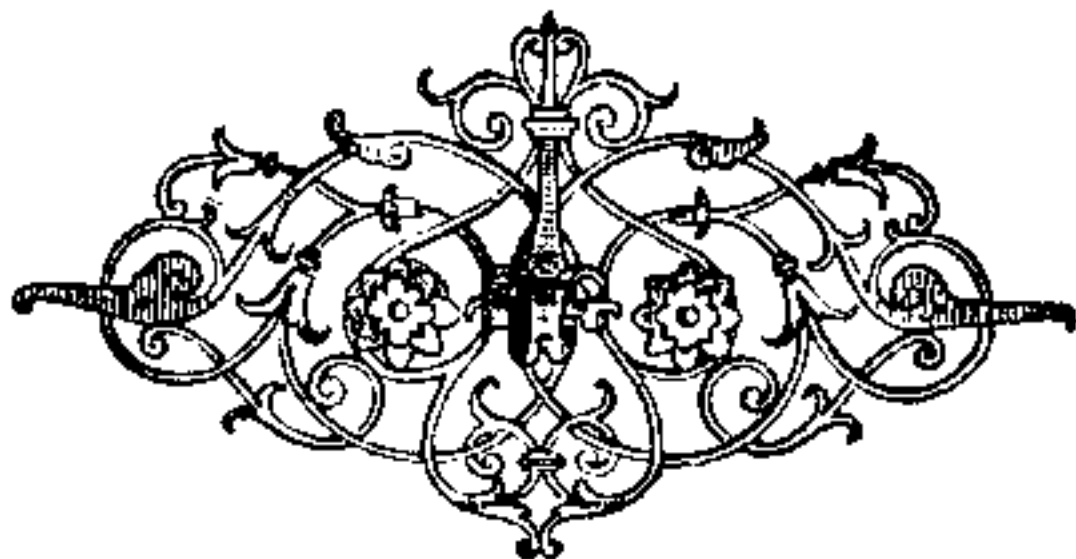
I have endeavoured to represent variety of humours (most of the persons of the Play differing in their characters from one another), which was the practice of Ben Jonson, whom I think all dramatic poets ought to imitate, though none are like to come near ; he being the only person that appears to me to have made perfect representations of human life. Most other authors, that I ever read, either have wild romantic tales, wherein they strain love and honour to that ridiculous height that it becomes burlesque ; or in their lower comedies content themselves with one or two humours at most, and those not near such perfect characters as the admirable Jonson always made, who never wrote comedy without seven or eight excellent humours. I never saw one, except that of Falstaff, that was in my judgment comparable to any of Jonson's considerable humours. You will pardon this digression, when I tell you he is the man, of all the world, I most passionately admire for his excellency in his dramatic poetry.

Though I have known some of late so insolent to say, that Ben Jonson wrote his best Plays without wit ; imagining that all the wit in Plays consisted in bringing two persons upon the stage to break jests and to bob one another, which they call repartee ; not considering that there is more wit and invention required in the finding out good humour, and matter proper for it, than in all their smart repartees. For in the writing of a humour, a man is confined not to swerve from the character, and obliged to say nothing but what is proper to it : but in the Plays which have been wrote of late, there is no such thing as perfect character, but the two chief persons are most commonly a swearing, drinking, whoring ruffian for a lover, and an impudent, ill-bred Tomrig for a mistress, and these are the fine people of the Play ; and there is that latitude in this, that almost anything is proper for them to say ; but their chief subject is bawdy and profaneness, which they call brisk writing, when the most dissolute of men, that relish those things well enough in private, are shocked at 'em in public. And methinks, if there were nothing but the ill manners of it, it should make poets avoid that indecent way of writing.

represent ; that, having so many faults of my own, should take the liberty to judge of others, to impeach my fellow-criminals. I must confess, it is very ungenerous to accuse those, that modestly confess their own errors ; but positive men, that justify all their faults, are common enemies, that no man ought to spare ; prejudicial to all societies they live in, destructive to all communication, always endeavouring magisterially to impose upon our understandings, against the freedom of mankind. These ought no more to be suffered amongst us than wild beasts : for no corrections, that can be laid upon 'em, are of power to reform 'em ; and certainly it was a positive fool that Solomon spoke of, when he said, "Bray him in a mortar, and yet he will retain his folly."

But I have troubled you too long with this discourse, and am to ask pardon for it, and the many faults you will find in the Play ; and beg you will believe, that whatever I have said of it, was intended not in justification, but excuse of it. Look upon it, as it really was, wrote in haste, by a young writer, and you will easily pardon it ; especially when you know that the best of our dramatic writers have wrote very ill Plays at first, nay some of 'em have wrote several, before they could get one to be acted ; and their best Plays were made with great expense of labour and time. Nor can you expect a very correct Play, under a year's pains at the least, from the wittiest man of the nation ; it is so difficult a thing to write well in this kind. Men of quality, that write for their pleasure, will not trouble themselves with exactness in their Plays ; and those that write for profit would find too little encouragement for so much pains, as a correct Play would require.

Vale.



PROLOGUE.

How popular are poets nowadays !
Who can more men at their first summons raise,
Than many a wealthy home-bred gentleman,
By all his interest in his country can.
They raise their friends ; but in one day arise
'Gainst one poor poet all these enemies :
For so he has observed you always are,
And against all that write maintain a war.
What shall he give you composition now ?
Alas ! he knows not what you will allow.
He has no cautionary song, nor dance,
That might the treaty of his peace advance ;
No kind romantic lovers in his Play,
To sigh and whine out passion, such as may
Charm waiting-women with heroic chime,
And still resolve to live and die in rhyme
Such as your ears with love and honour feast,
And play at *crambo* for three hours at least :
That fight, and woo, in verse in the same breath,
And make similitudes, and love in death :
———But if you love a fool, he bid me say,
He has great choice to show you in his Play ;
(To do you service) I am one to-day.
Well, gallants, 'tis his first, 'faith, let it go,
Just as old gamesters by young bubbles do,
This first and smaller stake let him but win,
And for a greater sum you'll draw him in.
Or use our poet, as you would a hare,
Which, when she's hunted down, for sport you spare.
At length take up, and damn no more for shame.
For if you only at the quarry aim,
This critic poaching will destroy your game.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

- STANFORD, a morose melancholy man, tormented beyond measure with the impertinence of people, and resolved to leave the world to be quit of them.
- LOVEL, an airy young gentleman, friend to STANFORD, one that is pleased with and laughs at the impertinents; and that which is the other's torment, is his recreation.
- SIR POSITIVE AT-ALL, a foolish knight, that pretends to understand every thing in the world, and will suffer no man to understand anything in his company; so foolishly positive, that he will never be convinced of an error, though never so gross.
- NINNY, a conceited poet, always troubling men with impertinent discourses of poetry, and the repetition of his own verses; in all his discourse he uses such affected words that 'tis as bad as the canting of a gipsy.
- WOODCOCK, a familiar loving coxcomb, that embraces and kisses all men; so used to his familiar endearing expressions, that he cannot forbear them in the midst of his anger.
- HUFFE, an impudent, cowardly hector, that torments STANFORD with coming to borrow money, and is beaten by him.
- ROGER, STANFORD'S man.
- FATHER to EMILIA and CAROLINA.
- COUNTRY GENT, a grave, ill-bred coxcomb, that never speaks without a proverb.
- TIM. SCRIBBLE, }
 JACOB DASH } two Justices' clerks.
- Sergeant, with a File of Musqueteers, Waiters, Fiddlers, &c.
- EMILIA, of the same humour with STANFORD.
- CAROLINA, of the same humour with LOVEL.
- LADY VAINE, a whore, that takes upon her the name of a lady, very talkative and impertinently affected in her language, always pretending to virtue and honour.
- LUCE, EMILIA'S maid.
- BRIDGET, LADY VAINE'S maid.

SCENE—LONDON. The time, in the month of March, 1667-8.



THE SULLEN LOVERS.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—STANFORD'S *Lodging.*

Enter STANFORD *and* ROGER *his* Man.



TANF. In¹ what unlucky minute was I born, to be tormented thus where'er I go? What an impertinent age is this we live in, when all the world is grown so troublesome, that I should envy him that spends his days in some remote and unfrequented place, with none but bears and wolves for his companions, and never sees the folly of mankind!

Rog. Good sir, be patient, let it not disturb you.

Stanf. Patient! Thou mayst as well teach patience to a man that has a fit of the colic or the stone!

Enter LOVEL.

Lov. What, in a fit again, Stanford? Now art thou as moody as a poet, after his Play is damned.

[*Exit* ROGER.]

Stanf. Oh, Lovel! I am tormented so beyond my patience, I am resolved to quit the world, and find some uninhabited place far from converse; where I may live as free as Nature made me.

¹ In the original edition, as usual with plays of the period, this speech is cut up into a sort of bastard blank verse, which alternates throughout with plain prose. The reprint of the next century,

Lov. Why this is downright madness. Prithee send for a chirurgeon and open a vein, try what that will do ; for thou wilt be as ripe for Bedlam else as a fanatic.

Stanf. What would you have me do? Where'er I turn me, I am baited still by some importunate fools, that use me worse than boys do cocks upon Shrove Tuesday ; this makes my life so tedious and unpleasant, that, rather than endure it longer, I'll find out some place in the West Indies, where I may see a man no oftener than a blazing-star.

Lov. Why, thou wilt come to be bound in thy bed, Stanford. Thank Heaven, I find nothing makes me weary of my life ; thou art scandalous. Why dost thou abuse this age so? Methinks it's as pretty an honest, drinking, whoring age, as a man would wish to live in.

Stanf. Sure, Lovel, thou wert born without a gall, or bearst thy anger like a useless thing, that canst endure to live among such fools, as we are every day condemned to see.

Lov. Where's the trouble?

Stanf. Sure thou art insensible, or thou wouldst not ask me. I am more restless than the man that has a raging fever on him ; and like him I change my place, thinking to ease myself ; but find that, which should lessen, does increase my pain.

Lov. As how, sir?

Stanf. Could any man have borne but yesterday's impertinence?

Lov. What was that? for I have not seen you since.

Stanf. In the morning, coming abroad to find you out (the only friend with whom I can enjoy myself), comes in a brisk, gay coxcomb of the town. "O Lord, sir," says he, "I am glad I've taken you within. I come on purpose to tell you the news, d'ye hear it?" Then might I reasonably expect to hear of some great intrigue or other : at least that the Kings of France and Spain

five times, with a great deal of amazement, says he, "Jack Scatterbrain comes in with ten guineas last night into the Groom-Porter's, and carried away two hundred;" and then teased me half an hour to tell me all his throws.

Lov. Now, should I have been pleased with this.

Stanf. You make me mad to hear you say so.

Lov. If you are weary of one company, why don't you try another? and vary your companions as often as your young gallants do their mistresses, or the well-bred ladies their servants.

Stanf. Where'er I go I meet the same affliction: if I go into the city, there I find a company of fellows selling of their souls for twopence in the shilling profit.

Lov. You are too satirical——

Stanf. Besides I find the very fools I avoid at this end of the town come thither, some to take up money at ten in the hundred, what with interest and brokage as they call it; others to take up commodities upon tick, which they sell at half value for ready money; and these inhuman rascals in the very midst of all their business will fix upon me, and I am more barbarously used by 'em, than a new poet by a knot of critics.

Lov. So, sir! go on with your relation.

Stanf. The other day, being tired almost to death with the impertinence of fops that importuned me, for variety I ventured into a coffee-house; there I found a company of formal starched fellows talking gravely, wisely, and nothing to the purpose, and with undaunted impudence discoursing of the right of empires; the management of peace and war; and the great intrigues of councils; when on my conscience you would have sooner took 'em for tooth-drawers than Privy Councillors.

Lov. But why don't you make this pleasant to yourself, and laugh at 'em as I do?

Stanf. Faith, sir, I cannot find the jest on't.

Lov. Yet methinks, however, this should not make

Stanf. Sure, Lovel, you have patience more than ever stoic had! This damned impertinence makes me resolved to fly my country; I can never find one hour's refreshment in a year. If I go to the theatre, where all people hope to please themselves; either I find an insupportable Play, or if a good one, ill acted; or, which is worse, so many troublesome wits buzzing about my ears that I am driven from thence too.

Lov. If this torments you so, then change the scene, and go to Court, where conversation is refined.

Stanf. Why, so I do; but there I find a company of gaudy nothings, that fain would be courtiers; that think they are hardly dealt withal not to have employment too. Besides, when after all my persecutions I think to ease myself at night by sleep, as last night about eleven or twelve of clock, at a solemn funeral the bells set out! That men should be such owls to keep five thousand people awake with ringing a peal to him that does not hear it!

Lov. But 'tis generously done, especially since in my conscience they expect no thanks for their labour, neither from their dead friend nor any one else.

Stanf. A curse upon 'em; this was no sooner past, but about two in the morning comes the bell-man, and in a dismal tone repeats worse rhymes than a cast poet of the nursery can make; after him come those rogues that wake people with their barbarous tunes, and upon their tooting instruments make a more hellish noise than they do at a Playhouse, when they flourish for the entrance of witches.

Lov. All this disturbs not me. But if you are troubled with this noise, why don't you live in the country? There you may be free.

Stanf. Free! Yes, to be drunk with March beer, and wine worse than ever was served in at Pye-corner at the eating of pigs; and hear no other discourse but of horses,

Lov. I would not be of your uneasy disposition for the world. But granting all this, cannot the women of the town please you? Methinks the pretty devils have charms enough to keep me in the world still, without the danger of being *felo-de-se*.

Stanf. Women! Oh! name 'em not: they are impertinence itself, I can scarce endure the sight of 'em.

Lov. Why thou art stark mad! 'faith for my part, I ne'er met with any of the sex that was kind and pretty, but I could bear with her impertinence.

Stanf. It cannot be.

Lov. No! would thou'dst try me, and bring me to a new woman that's handsome; if I boggled at her impertinence, may I never have other to help me at my necessity than an oyster-wife, or one that cries ends of gold and silver! Methinks beauty and impertinence do well enough together.

Stanf. Sure you rally with me all this while. You cannot be so stupid to think I have not reason¹ in my opinion; but nothing I have ever told you yet has equalled the persecution of this day.

Lov. I know whom that concerns—prithee let me heart't, that I may laugh a little at those monkeys; the variety of their folly always affords new matter.

Stanf. That it does, to my sad experience. This morning, just as I was coming to look for you, Sir Positive At-all, that fool that will let no man understand anything in his company, arrests me with his impertinence. Says he, with a great deal of gravity, "Perhaps I am the man of the world that have found out two Plays, that betwixt you and I have a great deal of wit in 'em; those are, *The Silent Woman* and *The Scornful Lady*;² and if I understand anything in the world, there's wit enough in both those to make one good Play; if I had

¹ This, from the French, *avoir raison*, was apparently a fashionable Gallianism of the day. We see from *Sir Martin Mar-all* that it was

the management of 'em : for you must know, this is a thing I have thought upon and considered."

Lov. This is the pleasantest thing I ever heard.

Stanf. May you have enough on't then, if you think so. But this was not all, for notwithstanding I granted his opinion, he forced me to stay an hour to hear his impertinent reasons for't ; but no sooner, by some happy accident or other, had I got rid of him, but in comes that familiar loving puppy Woodcock, that admires fools for wits, and torments me with a damned coranto, as he calls it, upon his violin, which he used so barbarously, I was ready to take it for a bagpipe.

Lov. This would have made me broke my spleen with laughter.

Stanf. I must be stung with a tarantula, before I could laugh at it. But here my persecution did not end ; for after I had got loose from the other two, whom should I see as I came along but that infinite coxcomb poet Ninny, who by force of arms hales me into his lodging, and reads me there a confounded scene in heroic verse ; so that what with Sir Positive's orations, Woodcock's squeaking fiddle, and poet Ninny's heroic fustian, I have a greater windmill in my brain than a new politician with his head full of reformation ; but, as fate would have it, in came a dun, and out got I, and for fear of further interruption came back to my lodging.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. O, sir ! here's poet Ninny.

Enter NINNY.

Stanf. I ha' but named the devil, and see ! I have raised him.

Ninny. Mr. Lovel, your humble servant.

Lov. Sweet Mr. Ninny, I am yours.

just now ; but you know, sir, we cannot help the impertinence of foolish idle fellows.

Stanf. No, no ! you have convinced me sufficiently of that. [*Aside.*] How the devil could he follow me ? [*LOVEL and NINNY whisper.*] I think the rascal has as good a nose as a bloodhound.

Ninny. I have a copy of heroic verses will fit him, I warrant you.

Lov. Read 'em to him ; he's a great judge, I can assure you.

Ninny. Sir, I am happy to meet with one that is so great a judge of poetry as you are ; for it is a miserable thing for an author to expose his things to empty giddy fellows ; and let me tell you, between you and I, there are seven thousand fools to seven wise men.

Lov. That so great a truth should be spoken by one that I'll swear is none of the seven !

Stanf. Now do you judge, Lovel.

Enter WOODCOCK.

'Slife, another teaser here ! Woodcock ?

Wood. Dear Ninny ; ah, dear Lovel ; ah, my dear Jack Stanford [*kisses them all*] ; I am the happiest man in thy friendship of any man's upon earth, dear Jack. I have the greatest value for thee in the world ; prithee kiss me again, dear heart.

Stanf. Now, Lovel, have I reason or not ?

Lov. That you have to laugh ; this is my recreation.

Stanf. Well ! if I do not leave the world within these three days, may I be eternally baited by Sir Positive, Ninny, and Woodcock, which is a curse worse than the worst of my enemy's wishes. [*Aside.*

Wood. Ha ! art thou resolved to give over the world too, dear heart ? There's a lady that came to town yesterday that is of the same mind ; she told me so, but I have she will not follow me.

Ninny. Are you so? But I hope I shall catch her from you for all that.

Wood. She says she's so troubled with impertinent people, which, between you and I, Jack, are so numerous in this town, that a man cannot live in quiet for 'em, that she's resolved to leave the world to be quit of 'em.

Ninny. Yes, faith, she told me so last night, as I was reading a scene of my play to her.

Stanf. No doubt she had reason.

Wood. 'Tis your acquaintance, Ned Lovel; Carolina's sister, Emilia.

Lov. Now, Stanford, I'll oblige you, and bring you acquainted with this lady; certainly her humour will please you.

Stanf. My friend torment me too! Have I not impertinent acquaintance enough already, but you must endeavour to trouble me with more?

Wood. Well, that's an excellent copy of verses of thine, dear Ninny. Come on, Jack, thou shalt hear 'em.

Stanf. Hell and damnation! [*Offers to go out.*]

Ninny. Hold, hold; you shall hear. "Your sad indifference——" (Look you, sir, 'tis upon a lady that is indifferent in her carriage toward me.) "Your sad indifference——" (I am confident this will please you: here are many thoughts I was happy in, and the choice of words not unpleasant, which you know is the greatest matter of all.) "Your sad indifference so wounds——" (Look you, you shall find as much soul, and force, and spirit, and flame in this as ever you saw in your life.)

Wood. Come, Jack, hear't, it is a most admirable piece.

Stanf. Now, Lovel, what think you? [*LOVEL laughs.*] Gentlemen, I have extraordinary business; I must leave you.

Wood. No, no, hold! 'Faith, thou shalt stay and hear

Stanf. O devil! What have I deserved to have this inflicted upon me?

NINNY [*reads*]:

Your sad indifference so wounds, my fair,
At once I hope, and do at once despair.

How do you like that, ha?—

You do at once both hate and kindness show;
And are at once both kind and cruel, too.

Wood. Oh! very fine! is't not, Ned?

Low. Oh! extreme fine.

Stanf. What the devil makes you commend these sottish verses, that are nothing but a jingling of words? Let's go.

Ninny. Hold! hold! hold, hear the rest; hem——

[*Reads again.*]

At once my hopes you nourish and destroy,
My only grief, and yet my only joy.

Mark that.

Stanf. O, devil!

Ninny [*reads*]:

Virtue and vice at once in you do shine;
Your inclinations are, and are not mine.

Wood. O admirable! didst ever hear anything so fine in thy life, dear heart?

Stanf. Oh! how these curs bait me!

Ninny [*reads again*]:

At once a storm and calm I do espy,
And do at once a smile and frown descry.
At once you kindle and put out my flame:
I cold as ice, as hot as charcoal am.

Mark that, Mr. Stanford; I was very happy in that thought, as I hope to breathe.

Wood. Upon my word, Jack, that's a great flight of his.

Rog. Sir, methinks there's as pretty a soul in't, as a man shall see in a summer's day.

Lov. Why do you torment yourself thus? methinks nothing can be pleasanter.

Stanf. Gentlemen, detain me not; I'll stay no longer.

Ninny. Dear Mr. Stanford, I ha' just done; if you have any respect in the world for me, stay and hear the end on't.

Wood. Nay, 'faith, Jack, thou shalt stay.

Stanf. What's this I endure!

Ninny [*reads*]:

My fate at once is gentle and severe,
You will not show your hate, nor love declare:
Such safety and such danger's in your eye,
That I resolve at once to live and die.

There's body and soul in that last couplet.

Lov. Hey, riddle my riddle; but this is the fashionable way of writing.

Ninny. What say you, sir? Are they not well? You are a great judge.

Stanf. Pray, sir, let me go, I am no judge at all, let me go; I will not stay.

Enter Sir POSITIVE AT-ALL.

Sir Positive here! I had rather go against an insurrection of prentices, than encounter him.

Sir Posit. Ah, dear Jack! Have I found thee? I would not but have seen you for twenty pounds: I have made this morning a glorious corrant, an immortal corrant, a corrant with a soul in it; I'll defy all Europe to make such another. You may talk of your Baptists, your Locks, and your Banisters; let me see 'em mend this: why, here's at least twenty-five notes' compass, Fa, la, la, &c. You shall hear.

Wood. Come, Sir Positive, let's hear't.

Sir Posit. With all my heart: Fa, la, la.

Stanf. Oh Heaven! Sir Positive, though I love music, yet I must tell you, I am out of tune.

Ninny. Out of tune, ha, ha, ha—now have you said the best thing in the world, and do not know it.

Stanf. Sir Positive, I must take my leave of you, I must not lose my business for a little music——

Sir Posit. Hold, now you talk of music——

Stanf. 'Slife, sir, I talk of my business.

Sir Posit. But for music, if any man in England gives you a better account of that than I do, I will give all mankind leave to spit upon me. You must know, it's a thing I have thought upon and considered, and made it my business from my cradle; besides, I am so naturally a musician, that "Gamut," "A re," "Bemi," were the first words I could learn to speak: do you like Baptist's way of composing?

Lov. No doubt, sir, he's a great master.

Wood. As ever was born, take that from me.

Sir Posit. Upon my word, Stanford, I will make all my tunes like his. You shall hear his vein in this corrant now.

Stanf. One trouble upon the neck of another—when shall I be delivered from these fools?

Sir Posit. Do but ask Ninny there.

Ninny. Yes, doubtless, Sir Positive has a great soul of music in him; he has great power in corrantos and jigs, and composes all the music to my Plays; he has great power.

Wood. As any man that ever was born, dear heart.

Sir Posit. Come, you shall hear't——

Stanf. Sir, I beg your pardon; I'll hear it some other time.

Sir Posit. Pish, pish; upon my honour thou shalt stay, and hear it now.

Lov. Come, dear Sir Positive, make us happy.

Sir Posit. Observe! here's flame in this corrant—Fa, la, la. There's a delicate note in B, *fa bemi* in *alt.* And observe now how it falls down to C *sol fa ut*—Fa

Stanf. I do not like that part of your corrant.

Sir Posit. It is a prodigious thing, thou shouldst ever be in my company, and understand music no better; thou hast found fault with the best part of the corrant, ask Woodcock else.

Wood. By the Lord Harry, there is a great deal of glory in that part of the corrant.

Sir Posit. Observe here how cunningly it falls out of the key, fa, la, &c. And now at last it ends quite out of the key.

Stanf. Well, well! it's an excellent corrant; what the devil will you have more?—Fare you well.

Sir Posit. No, no: stay but one minute, and you shall hear it altogether. Ninny, do you beat time——

Wood. Well thought on; do, and I'll dance to't, dear hearts.

Stanf. Now, Lovel, what think you? this torture's worse than any the Dutch invented at Amboyna.^r

[SIR POSITIVE *sings*, NINNY *beats false time*, and WOODCOCK *dances to't*.

Sir Posit. Here's a corrant for you! ha! Stanford, what thinkst of this?

Wood. Think! quoth a', I think I danced it as well as any man in England, bully-rock.

Lov. Certainly, Sir Positive, he dances very finely.

Sir Posit. As any man, that ever was born upon two legs: I defy any man in the world that outdoes him; for, betwixt you and I, I taught him every step he has.

Rog. Upon my word, Woodcock, you have as much power in dancing, as any man in England.

Wood. Dear Heart, let me kiss thee; 'gad, thou art a great judge—here, drink my health.

Rog. Ah! dear flattery, how convenient a sin art thou!

[*Aside.*

Ninny. Come, Mr. Woodcock, you shall go to the reading of my Play.

Wood. Ay, come on, bully-rock—

[*Exeunt NINNY and WOODCOCK.*

Low. Come, I'll take pity on you, Stanford, and go before, and prepare some place or other, where we may enjoy ourselves, and you be free. I'll take your man along with me, and send him back again in haste for you; by that means you may get loose.

Stanf. For Heaven's sake make haste, you'll oblige me for ever. [*Exeunt LOVEL and ROGER.*] Sir Positive! I am sorry I must leave you now; I must go speak with a gentleman, that came from Flanders last night.

Sir Posit. Flanders! if any man gives you that account of Flanders that I do, I'll suffer death; you must know I have thought of their affairs, I have considered of the thing thoroughly, never speak on't more, name it no more, let it not enter into your thoughts; 'tis a lost nation, absolutely undone, lost for ever, take that from me. And yet were I with Castel Rodrigo but one quarter of an hour, I'd put him in a way to save all yet.

Stanf. This is beyond all sufferance—Sir Positive, I am so much in haste, that none but yourself should have stayed me of all mankind.

Sir Posit. Mankind! dost thou know what thou sayst now? dost thou talk of mankind? I am confident, thou never so much as thought'st of mankind in thy life; I'll tell thee, I will give dogs leave to piss upon me, if any man understands mankind better than myself, now you talk of that. I have considered all mankind. I have thought of nothing else but mankind this month; and I find you may be a poet, a musician, a painter, a divine, a mathematician, a statesman; but betwixt you and I, let me tell you, we are all mortal.

Stanf. Well, they may talk of the pox, want of

Enter BRIDGET.

Bridg. Sir Positive, my Lady Vaine desires you would come and look upon her picture that's come this morning from Master Lilly's.¹

Sir Posit. Why! there 'tis now, Stanford, that people should have no more judgment; she had as good have thrown her money into the dirt; 'tis true, I could have made him have made a good picture on't, if I had drawn the lines for him; but I was not thought worthy: and now you talk of painting, either I am the greatest fop in nature, or, if I do not understand that, I understand nothing in the world. Why! I will paint with Lilly, and draw in little with Cooper for £5,000.

Stanf. O intolerable impertinence! I am afraid he will not go, now his mistress sends for him.

Sir Posit. Dear Stanford! I must beg thy excuse.

Stanf. A curse on him! that's easily granted. [*Aside.*

Sir Posit. Come, Mistress Bridget, I'll go along with you. Dear Stanford, take it not unkindly, for I would not leave thee but upon this occasion.

Stanf. A thousand thanks to the occasion. [*Aside.*

Sir Posit. But you know a man must not disoblige his mistress, Jack.

Stanf. Oh no, by no means.

Sir Posit. Adieu.

[*Exeunt* SIR POSITIVE and BRIDGET.]

Stanf. So! this trouble is over.

O Fate! how little care you took of me,

By these misfortunes I too plainly see. [*Exit.*

¹ *I.e.*, Lely's.



ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of EMILIA
and CAROLINA.*

Enter CAROLINA and LOVEL.



CAR. I long to bring 'em together, they will be well matched; but we must stay a while, for she has been so teased this morning, she has locked herself up in her chamber.

Lov. Stanford was ready to fall out with me, when I named a new acquaintance to him, and will not be persuaded there is such a creature as woman, that is not impertinent.

Car. Emilia is as cautious as he can be, and would be ready to swoon at the sight of a new face; for she will not believe but all mankind are coxcombs. For heaven's sake, Lovel, let's surprise them into one another's company, we shall have admirable sport.

Lov. We'll do't; but, madam, why should we mind their business, that have enough of our own? What if you and I should play the fools once in our lives, and enter into the bonds of wedlock together?

Car. Fie, fie, 'tis such a constant condition of life, that a woman had as good be professed in a nunnery, for she can no sooner get out of one than t'other.

Lov. But with your pardon, madam, this is somewhat the pleasanter condition of the two.

matrimony into dispute any more, lest that they make us desire it: I have known some men, by maintaining a heresy in life, become of that opinion in good earnest. But do you know that my Lady Vaine was here this morning?

Low. No, madam; but what of that?

Car. She told me that of you, will make your ears tingle.

Low. Of me, madam! What was't?

Car. She says you are the most inconstant man, the most perfidious wretch that e'er had breath, and bid me fly you as I would infection.

Low. What the devil did she mean by that?

Car. Come, let me know what's betwixt you, or I'll rack you but I'll know it.

Low. This jealousy makes me believe you love me. That she should be prating herself! How many women would be thought honest if they could hold their own tongues? [*Aside.*

Car. I am like to have a fine servant of you: but a lady would have a fine time on't, that were to marry you, to stake all the treasures of her youth and virginity, which have been preserved with so much care, and, Heaven knows, some trouble too, against nothing.

Low. Faith, madam, I have e'en as much as I had before; but, if you'll be kind, I'll take that care off your hands, and soon rid you of that trouble.

Car. No, no, go to my Lady Vaine, give her your heart; poor lady, she wants it too; but for me, I can keep my affliction to myself.

Low. Dear Carolina! name her no more; if you do, I will get drunk immediately: and then I shall have courage enough to fall aboard her.

Car. Lord! what a loss shall I have! Heaven send me patience, or I shall ne'er outlive it, to lose so proper a gentleman; but why should I think to rob her of her due? No, no, now I think on't, to her

Lov. For Heaven's sake, Carolina, do not tyrannise thus ; why, I had rather be kept waking at an ill Play, than endure her company.

Car. Thus are we poor women despised, when we give away our hearts to ungrateful men ; but Heaven will punish you.

Lov. Dear Carolina, let's leave fooling, and be in downright earnest.

Car. I hope, sir, your intentions are honourable.

Lov. Madam, why should you once doubt it? My love to you is as pure as the flame that burns upon an altar. You are too unjust, if you suspect my honour.

Car. Now will you leave fooling ; on my conscience he is in earnest.

Lov. As much as the severest anchorite can be at his devotions.

Car. Oh ! are you so? it's a hard case ; but pray you, sir, leave off ; I had rather hear a silenced parson preach sedition, than you talk seriously of love. Would you could see how it becomes you ; why, you look more comically-than an old-fashioned fellow singing of Robin Hood or Chevy Chase. "My love to you's as pure as the flame that burns upon an altar ;" how scurvily it sounds !

Lov. You are the cruellest tyrant alive : let us be serious a little, I have rallied myself into a passion will ruin me else.

Car. Come, in what posture must I stand to hear you talk formally ?

Lov. On my conscience 'tis easier to fix quicksilver than your humour, madam ; but if you would enter into wedlock, I can assure you, that will bring you to gravity.

Car. Let me but once more hear you name marriage, and I protest I'll send for my Lady Vaine to you. I tell

marriage, 'tis good for nothing, but to make friends fall out.

Lov. Nay, 'faith, if you be at that, I can do you the same civility without that ceremony; as you say, it is a kind of formal thing.

Car. No! I shall take example by my Lady Vaine. Poor lady! she little thought to be unkindly used, I warrant you.

Lov. Again that name!

Car. Besides, if we were married you might say, "'Faith, Carolina is a pretty woman, and has humour good enough, but a pox on't she's my wife;" no, no, I'll have none of that.

Lov. Do you still mistrust my honour? 'tis unkindly done, but——

Car. Hold, hold, her door opens; step you in there, and you may hear how she entertains the motion.

Enter EMILIA with a book in her hand.

Emil. The wisdom of this Charles the Fifth was wonderful; who 'midst of all his triumphs and his greatness, when he had done what glory had obliged him to, seeing the vanity of mankind, did quit the pleasures that attend a monarch's state; nay more, that most bewitching thing called power, and left the world, to live an humble life, free from the importunity of fools. Was't not wisely done, sister?

Car. Yes, no doubt on't, as wisely done to go to a monastery to shun fools, as to keep company with usurers and brokers to avoid knaves.

Emil. Thou art a foolish girl. I am tormented with the impertinence of both sexes so, I am resolved I'll not stay one week out of a nunnery.

Car. O' my conscience thou art stark out of thy wits with reading of Burton's "Melancholy." To a nunnery to avoid impertinence!—where canst thou think to meet

Emil. Now you are too censorious.

Car. You should like me the better. But must you needs find relief there? Do you think any women, that have sense, or warmth of blood, as we have, would go into a nunnery?

Emil. If I should meet with fops there too, I should be irreparably lost. Oh Heaven! what shall I do to ease myself? Rather than endure the persecution of those fools, that haunt us here, I will go where neither man nor woman ever came.

Lov. [*within*]. O rare! Stanford, here's just thy counterpart to a hair.

Car. Since thou art resolved to sequester thyself from company, I'll buy thee a cage, and hang thee up by the parrot over the way; thou shalt converse with none but him. I hope he's not impertinent too?

Emil. Must you torment me too? Fie, sister! What would you have me do? my patience is not great enough to endure longer to see the folly of this age. Do you judge, after I had been sufficiently worried by the Lady Vaine this morning, whom I was forced to get rid of by telling her, her lover, my cousin Positive, was at her lodging, which, you know, is as far as the Pall-Mall.

Car. That Virtuosa, as she calls herself, is the pleasantest creature I ever saw: but prithee, sister, let me hear none of your fantastic stories; methinks you are as impertinent as anybody.

Emil. It distracts me to see this folly in things that are intended for reasonable creatures.

Lov. O Stanford! if this lady does not match thee, the devil's in't. [*Within*.

Car. These fools you talk of, afford me so much recreation, that I do not know how I should laugh without 'em.

Emil. Thou hast no sense; they make me weary of the world! Heaven! what shall I do?

admiring it, has a great desire to see you. Before you resolve to leave the world, try how he will please you.

Emil. What a ridiculous thing it is of you to wish me to new acquaintance, when I am leaving the old! I am sure he's impertinent, for all mankind I have met are so.

Car. 'St! Lovel.

Lov. Your humble servant, ladies. [Comes out.]

Emil. Is this he? Then farewell.

Lov. Madam! Pray stay, and give me the honour of one word with you.

Emil. I knew what he was: my Lady Vaine here!

Enter LADY VAINÉ and BRIDGET.

Lady Vaine. Master Lovel! your humble servant.

Lov. Your ladyship's humble servant:—How I hate sight of her in presence of my mistress!

Car. Lovel! for shame, be civil to your mistress. Let's hear you make love a little.

Lady Vaine. Madam, upon my reputation there was no such thing; Sir Positive was never there. Sure some dirty fellow or other brought a false message, on purpose to rob me of the pleasure of your ladyship's sweet company. Would he were hanged for his pains, the passion he has put me in has put me out of breath.

[To EMILIA.]

Lov. Lord! how soon she's put in and put out!

Lady Vaine. But, madam, as soon as ever I found he was not there, I made all possible haste to wait upon you again, for fear your ladyship should resent my too abrupt departure.

Emil. O Heavens, take pity of my afflictions! Madam——

Lady Vaine. But the truth on't is, I designed to spend this day with you, since I can be nowhere so well satisfied as with your ladyship's converse, a person who

Emil. Why, madam——

Lady Vaine. For the truth is, so few ladies have either, that they are things to be valued for their rarity.

Emil. Oh impertinence! Whither will this eternal tongue of hers carry her?

Lov. This is very pleasant, for her to name virtue and honour in my company! [Aside.

Emil. Madam! For Heaven's sake——

Lady Vaine. For the truth on't is, madam, a lady without virtue and honour is altogether as detestable as a gentleman without wit or courage.

Emil. Madam! I am sorry I cannot wait on you longer; I am engaged to dine abroad.

Lady Vaine. Where is't, madam? for I am resolved to go along with you.

Emil. Why, madam, you do not know the persons.

Lady Vaine. That's all one for that; let me alone to make my apology.

Emil. This is beyond all sufferance.

Car. I hope she will not leave her off so.

Lov. No; if she does, I am mistaken.

Lady Vaine. Come, madam, let's go.

Emil. But, madam, I must call at the Exchange first, to buy some trifles there.

Lady Vaine. O madam! I'll bring you to my milliner, that calls himself the Italian Milliner, or the little Exchange! he's better provided than any one in the Exchange.

Emil. I am on the sudden taken ill, and must retire.

Lady Vaine. Madam, d'ye think I, that am a *virtuosa*, understand no better than to leave you now you are not well? What's your distemper? No woman in England was more serviceable among her neighbours than I with my Flos Unguentorum, Paracelsian and Green Salve.

Lov. And your Album Græcum, I warrant you.

Lady Vaine. That Album Græcum was a salve of my

mother ; if it be, we must burn some blue-inkle and partridge feathers under your nose ; or she must smell to asafœtida, and have some cold water with a little flour to drink. Ay, ay, 'twill be so ; pray, Mr. Lovel, come and help to hold her.

Emil. No, no, madam ; there's no such thing, I'll assure you : I must beg leave to go to my chamber.

Lady Vaine. Come, madam, I'll conduct you, and be as careful of you as if you were my sister a thousand times.

Emil. Madam ! with your pardon, I desire to be alone, and try to rest.

Lady Vaine. Alone ! by no means in the world, madam ; it may be very dangerous. I would not for all the world, madam, you should be alone ; suppose you should fall into a fit alone. I can speak it by experience, 'tis dangerous for a lady to fall into a fit, without an able body by her. Come, madam, I'll conduct you in.

Emil. How shall I get rid of her ?

[*Exeunt* LADY VAINE and EMILIA.

Lov. Let's in and see when the fury of this Dol Common will be at an end.

Car. Come, come, we shall have the pleasure of seeing my sister worried almost to death.

[*Exeunt* LOVEL and CAROLINA.



SCENE II.

Enter STANFORD.

Stanf. I wonder my man returns not yet. I thought to have found Mr. Lovel here ; but here's one will do my

Enter HUFFE.

Huffe. Oh, Mr. Stanford! Have I found you?

Stanf. Oh Heavens! Will my punishment never end?

Huffe. I am the most unfortunate man that ever was born,

Stanf. Why do you trouble me with this? Am I the cause on't?

Huffe. No! but I'll tell you, upon my reputation, I have been nicked out of twenty pound just now at Spiering's, and lost seven to four for my last stake.

Stanf. What the devil's this to me? Let me go.

Huffe. But, sir, I'll tell you a thing that very nearly concerns you.

Stanf. Some other time. 'Slife, do not disturb me now.

Huffe. For Heaven's sake hear me; you'll repent it else.

Stanf. Make haste then, keep me in pain no longer.

Huffe. Why, I have found out the finest plump, fresh girl, newly come out of the country.

Stanf. Hell and damnation! Why do you trouble me with such trifles?

Huffe. [*aside*]. Trifles, does he call 'em? Well! I see this won't do. But, sir, I'll tell you somewhat concerns you more nearly; sir, it concerns your honour.

Stanf. My honour! Why, who dares call it in question?

Huffe. Not so, sir; but do you love generosity and honour?

Stanf. Why do you ask the question?

Huffe. Why, then I'll put you in a way to do a very generous and honourable thing.

Stanf. What do you mean by this impertinence?

Huffe. If you will relieve an honest gentleman in distress, lend me two pieces; you shall have 'em again

Stanf. 'Pox on you for an owl. There, take 'em ; I would I could get rid of all my impertinents at as cheap a rate.

Huffe. I give you a thousand thanks.

Stanf. 'Slife, trouble me no more ; be gone.

Huffe. Sir, it were a very ungrateful thing not to acknowledge the favour.

Stanf. Away, away, and let your gratitude alone.

[HUFFE offers to go out, and returns.]

Huffe. D'ye hear, Mr. Stanford ! upon mine honour I'll return 'em to-morrow night without fail.

Stanf. Curse on you for a rascal ! [*Exit HUFFE.*] So, here's one trouble over !

Enter ROGER.

Well, what's the news ?

Rog. Do you earnestly desire to know, sir ?

Stanf. Must I have impertinence in my own family too ?

Rog. Oh ! I am so out of breath ! I am not able to speak one word ; but if I had never so much breath I could tell you nothing but what you'd be glad to hear. If I had the wind of an Irish footman—nay, of a non-conforming parson, or——

Stanf. Or, with a pox to you ! One similitude more, and I'll break that fool's head of yours !

Rog. Well, sir, since you are in haste, I'll be as brief as a fiddler after he's paid for scraping, for I love to be so in cases of this importance, for I have heard——

Stanf. Out, you dog ; a sentence after your similitude ! You are as impertinent as a country witness.

Rog. I have done, sir, and now I'll tell you in one word. Hold, sir ! here's a spider in your periwig.

Stanf. Death, you rascal ! I'll ram it down your throat.

Rog. Be patient, sir. Seneca advises to moderate our

Stanf. Hang ye, rascal! Seneca is an ass in your mouth. Tell me quickly, or——

Rog. Why, sir, you are so impatient you will not hear me.

Stanf. Faith but I will; speak.

Rog. Not to boast of my diligence, which, though I say it, is as much——

Stanf. You dog, tell me quickly, or I'll cut your ears off.

Rog. Why, Mr. Lovel would have you come to him; what would you have?

Stanf. If I were not in haste, sirrah, I'd teach you to know your man and who you may put your tricks on, you impudent rascal!

[*As STANFORD is going out, enter WOODCOCK.*

Rog. Death! That I should find impertinence in others, and not see it in myself.

Wood. Dear Jack, thy humble servant: how dost do? My footman told me he saw thy man come in here, which made me believe I should find thee here; and I had not power to stay from thee, my dear bully-rock, for I can enjoy myself nowhere so well as in thy company. Let me kiss thee, dear heart; 'Gad, I had rather kiss thee than any woman.

Stanf. This is beyond all example! Oh horrid! his kindness is a greater persecution than the injuries of others.

Wood. I'll tell thee, dear heart, I love thee with all my heart: thou art a man of sense, dear rogue. I am infinitely happy in thy friendship; for I meet with so many impertinent, silly fellows every day, that a man cannot live in quiet for 'em, dear heart. For, between you and I, this town is more pester'd with idle fellows that thrust themselves into company, than the country is with attorneys; is it not, Jack? [Exit ROGER.

Stanf. Yes! I have too much reason to believe you, a

Wood. Ay, did I not tell you so, Jack? ha? but this is not my business. Dear rascal, kiss me; I have a secret to impart to thee, but if it take the least air I am undone. I have a project in my head shall raise me £20,000. I know you will promise secrecy, dear heart.

Stanf. Don't trouble me with it.

Wood. No! it concerns thee, man. Why, thou shalt go halves with me, dear heart.

Stanf. For Heaven's sake, sir, don't trust it with me. I have a faculty of telling all I know; I cannot help it.

Wood. Oh! dear bully-rock, that wheedle won't pass. Don't I know thou art a man of honour; and besides so reserved that thou wilt scarce tell a secret to thy friend?

Stanf. Sir, I am unhappy in your good opinion. This is beyond all sufferance.

Wood. No, 'faith, dear Jack, thou deserv'st it; but my project is this, d'ye see?

Stanf. Well! I am so tormented with impertinent fellows that I see there is no remedy.

Wood. As I hope to live, Jack, I am of thy opinion: the truth on't is 'tis intolerable, for a man can never be free from these fools in this town. I like thy resolution so well that I am the son of a whore if I don't go along with thee. Ah, how we shall enjoy ourselves when we are both together; how we shall despise the rest of the world, dear heart!

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Oh, Mr. Woodcock! Poet Ninny is gone to the Rose Tavern, and bid me tell you he has extraordinary business with you, and begs you would make all possible haste to him.

Wood. Oh, dear rascal, kiss me! thou art the honestest fellow in the world. Dear Jack, I must beg thy pardon for a few minutes, but I hope thou't not take it ill. Why, 'tis about business, dear heart: you know we

Stanf. Oh no, sir, by no means.

Wood. Nay, dear rogue, be not angry ; prithee, kiss me ; as I hope to live, I'll return immediately ; dear Jack, thy humble servant. [*Exit* WOODCOCK.

Stanf. This is a lucky accident.

Rog. Sir, I was fain to sin a little for you and get rid of him by this lie.

Stanf. Well, this shall excuse all your former errors ; I'll away, for fear some other fools should find me out. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE III.—*A Room in the House of EMILIA and CAROLINA.*

Enter EMILIA, LADY VAINE (*following her up and down*),
after them CAROLINA, LOVEL.

Car. Does she not tease her bravely, Lovel ?

Lov. Admirably ! Oh, that Stanford were here ! If 'twere for nothing but to see a fellow-sufferer !

Lady Vaine. Then, madam, will your ladyship be pleased to let me wait on you to a Play ? There are two admirable Plays at both houses ; and, let me tell you, madam, Sir Positive, that understands those things as well as any man in England, says I am a great judge.

Emil. Madam, I beseech you ask me no more questions ; I tell you I had as leave stand among the rabble, to see a jack-pudding eat a custard, as trouble myself to see a Play.

Lady Vaine. Oh, fie, madam ! a young lady, and hate Plays ! why, I'll tell you, madam, at one house there is a huge two-handed devil, and as brave a fat friar as one would wish to see in a summer's day ; and a delicate

with a jig in't, would do your heart good to see it ; but if there were nothing else in't, you might have your 4s. out in thunder and lightning, and, let me tell you, 'tis as well worth it as one penny's worth another.

Emil. What have I done?

Enter STANFORD.

Stanf. Am I trepanned into woman's company?

[Offers to go out, LOVEL lays hold of him.]

Lov. Hold, hold, hold! Madam, here's Mr. Stanford desires to kiss your hands.

Emil. I am in that disorder, that never woman was.

Lady Vaine. O Mr. Lovel! she's falling into a fit of an epilepsy. Help all to hold her, lend me a knife to cut her lace.

Stanf. This is worse than all the rest.

Lovel [to LADY VAINE]. Let me speak with you in the next room in private.

Lady Vaine. Sir, your most obedient servant ; I shall be glad of any occasion to retire with one for whom I have so great an affection.

Lov. [to Car.]. For Heaven's sake follow me, or I shall be in an ill condition.

Car. I find you are an arrant hypocrite, but I'll take you at your word for once.

[Exeunt LOVEL, LADY VAINE, and CAROLINA.]

[STANFORD and EMILIA walk up and down, and take little notice of one another.]

Emil. I am the greatest object of pity that ever was seen, I am never free from these importunate fools.

Stanf. I am not less afflicted, and have as much need of pity too.

Emil. I find no possibility of relief, but by leaving the world, that is so full of folly.

Stanf. Who would live in an age when fools are revered and impudence esteemed?

humble linsey-woolsey, now have variety of vests, periwigs and laced linen!

Stanf. One, that but the other day could eat but one meal a day, and that at a threepenny ordinary, now struts in state, and talks of nothing but Shattellin's and Lefrond's.

Emil. In so corrupt an age when almost all mankind flatter the greatest, and oppress the least; when to be just is to be out of fashion, and to betray a friend is lawful cunning.

Stanf. This is pleasant for her to speak against these things, as if she were not as bad as any one [*aside*]. Who would live in such a treacherous age to see this gentleman, that courts the t'other gentleman's wife, meet him and embrace him, and swear he loves him above the world? And he, poor fool, dotes extremely upon him, that does the injury!

Emil. Now has this fellow a design to have me think him wise [*aside*]. But wisdom and honesty are fooled out of countenance.

Stanf. Now the illiterate fool despises learning!

Emil. Nay, among the learned themselves, we find many that are great scholars by art, are most abominable fools by nature.

Stanf. This shall not persuade me to believe she is not impertinent. [*Aside.*

Emil. Now the qualifications of fine gentlemen are to eat a-la-mode, drink champagne, dance jigs, and play at tennis.

Stanf. To love dogs, horses, hawks, dice, and wenches, scorn wit, break windows, beat a constable, lie with his sempstress, and undo his tailor—it distracts me to think on't!

Emil. Now does he desire to be taken for a discreet fellow, but this will not do. [*Aside.*

Stanf. What relief can I expect in this age, when men take as much pains to make themselves fools as others have done to get wisdom?

Emil. Nay, fall in her company, and you shall find

Stanf. What shall I do? Whither shall I turn me to avoid these fools?

Enter LADY VAINE, NINNY, LOVEL *and* CAROLINA.

Lov. Now let's slip 'em.

Car. We shall have a very fair course.

Emil. O Heavens! Are they here?

Stanf. What will become of me?

Ninny to Emil. Oh, madam, I'll tell you; Stanford, pray hear once. 'Tis such a thing as never was in the world.

Lady Vaine. Ay, pray, sir, hear him, he's as pretty a wit as any man in this town, except Sir Positive, I assure you.

Stanf. What are we condemned to?

Emil. To a worse condition than galley-slaves.

Ninny. I was with my bookseller, madam, with that heroic poem which I presented to your ladyship, as an earnest of the honour I have for you. But, by the way, he's an ignorant ungrateful fellow, for, betwixt you and I, he has got some hundreds of pounds by some Plays and poems of mine, which he has printed; and, let me tell you, some under the names of Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ben Jonson too. But what do you think, madam, I asked the son of a whore for this poem?

Emil. Oh, insufferable!

Ninny. What think you, Stanford? [*Lays hold on him.*]

Stanf. Let me go; I have no judgment in these things.

Ninny. But I'll tell you; there are not above ten or twelve thousand lines in all the poems: and, as I hope to be saved, I asked him but twelve pence a line, one line with another.

Lady Vaine. And really, sir, that's as reasonable as he can possibly afford 'em, take that from me.

Stanf. Oh, devil! this is worse than a Sheerness ague, that will give a man some respite between the fits.

Ninny. But my dear madam, I have said that I

you must know, there are many hundreds of lines, that in their intrinsic value are worth ten shillings a line between father and son : and the greatest part of 'em are worth five shillings a line. But before George very few or none but are worth three shillings a line to the veriest Jew in Christendom ; they have that salt, thought, imagination, power, spirit, soul, and flame in 'em—ha !

Emil. What does this concern me ?

Ninny. No, but I'll tell you ; Stanford, prithee hear ; as I hope for mercy, this impudent rogue told me he would not give me two shillings for the whole poem ! An ignorant puppy ! a fellow of all the world I designed to make, for he might have sold these books for three shillings apiece, and I would have helped off with ten thousand of 'em, to ten thousand of my particular intimate friends. Besides, every one that had but heard of my name, which are almost all the king's subjects, would have bought some ; so that I should not have got above six or seven hundred pound, and in a fortnight's time have made this fellow an Alderman. That such ignorant rascals should be judges of wit or sense !

Lady Vaine. Well, sir, we shall never have a good world unless the State reforms these abuses.

Ninny. 'Tis very true, madam, for this thing is of consequence to the whole nation, Stanford.

Stanf. What the devil would you have ? Am I the cause of this ?

Ninny. No ! Heaven forbid I should say so. But, madam, I had forgot another advantage he had had by this.

Emil. Heaven defend me ! This puts me beyond all patience.

Ninny. I'll tell you, Stanford, prithee mind me a little.

Stanf. Oh ! now I am undone, ruined for ever ; Sir

Enter Sir POSITIVE.

Sir Posit. I heard your Ladyship was here, and came to kiss your hand [*to Lady Vaine*]. Oh, Stanford, art thou here? Well, how dost, cousin? I am glad I have found you all together. I came to present my Lady Vaine with a music I have made, which has that invention in't—I say no more, but I have been this month a making it, and, you must know, music is a thing I value myself upon. 'Tis a thing I have thought on, and considered, and made my business from my cradle.

Lov. Come, madam, now they are settled in their business, let's leave 'em.

Car. With all my heart.

Sir Posit. Come! you shall see it.

Emil. Cousin! Pray let it be another time.

Sir Posit. Nay, nay, never talk of that, you shall see't now, and let me tell you, I have as much power of invention in music as any man in England. Come in.

Stanf. O Heaven, when shall we be delivered from these fools?

Enter Fiddlers, and play a ridiculous piece of music.

Sir Posit. How do you like it, Stanford? is it not well? What say you cousin, ha?

Lady Vaine. Indeed, Sir Positive, it's very agreeable.

Sir Posit. Upon my honour, this honest fellow played it with a great deal of glory; he is a most incomparable bower. He has the most luscious, the most luxurious bow-hand of any man in Europe, take that from me; and let me tell you, if any man gives you a better account of the intrigue of the violin than I do, I am owl, a puppy, coxcomb, a logger-head, or what you will.

Emil. Sure there is magic in this; never to be free!

Sir Posit. Magic? why, do you understand magic?

Emil. No, no no, not I, cousin. O intolerable!

Sir Posit. I shall if you will, I shall tell you something

linen, resolve all horary questions, nay, raise a devil with Doctor Faustus himself, if he were alive.

Ninny. Woodcock a poet? a pimp, is he not?

[*To my Lady Vaine.*

Sir Posit. Who's that speaks of pimping there? Well! though I say't, no man pretend's to less than I do; but I cannot pass this by without manifest injury to myself.

Stanf. This puppy, rather than not be in at all, will declare himself a pimp.

Lady Vaine. But sir, are you such a manner of man?

Sir Posit. Why, madam, did you never hear of me for this?

Lady Vaine. No, sir! if I had——

Sir Posit. If I had—ha, ha, ha! Why, madam, where have you lived all this while?

Lady Vaine. Oh, fie upon him! Madam, I shall lose my reputation, if I be seen in his company.

Sir Posit. Well! the pimps in this town are a company of empty, idle, insipid dull fellows; they have no design in'em.

Lady Vaine. Sir, I am sorry you are such a kind of man, but——

Sir Posit. Sorry! well! if I would bend myself to't, I would starve all these pimps, they should not eat bread; but I am not thought fit.

Lady Vaine. Sure you rally all this while.

Sir Posit. Rally! ha, ha, ha! Why, there is not a lady of pleasure from Blackwall to Tuttle Fields^r that I am not intimately acquainted with; nay, that I do not know the state of her body from her first entering into the calling.

Lady Vaine. Oh, madam! I am undone, ruined for ever by being in his company.

Sir Posit. Besides, for debauching of women, madam, I am the greatest son of a whore in the world, if any one comes near me.

Lady Vaine. Out upon you! if you be such a man, I

must look to my honour ; my reputation is dearer to me than all the world. I would not have a blemish in my honour for all the riches of the earth ! this makes me so covetous of your ladyship's company, a person of so much virtue and honour. But for Sir Positive, I defy him ; forbear my presence, you will undo my honour for ever.

Sir Posit. Oh, what have I done ?

Emil. Oh, horrid impertinence ! [Offers to go out.]

Sir Posit. Nay, nay dear cousin, stay, and see us friends first. Madam, I beg a thousand pardons. 'Tis true I said, no man in England understood pimping better than myself, but I meant the speculative, not the practical part of pimping.

Lady Vaine. O, that's something, I assure you ; if you had not brought yourself off well with your speculation, I would never have suffered you to have practised upon me ; for no woman in England values her honour more than I do.

Enter BRIDGET.

Bridg. Oh, madam, we must go to the "Setting-dog and Partridge" to supper to-night ; Master Whiskin came to invite us ; there will be the blades, and we shall have a ball.

Lady Vaine. Will there be none but our own company ?

Bridg. No, madam.

Lady Vaine. Well ! I am resolved not to fail if I can by any means get rid of Sir Positive ; for I love meat and drink, and fiddles, and such merry gentlemen with all my heart.

Enter WOODCOCK.

Wood. Your servant, dear hearts ; Madam Emilia, I kiss your hand. Dear Jack !

Emil. Nay, now it is time to shift for ourselves.

Wood. My dear bully-rock, can I serve thee in anything ?

Stanf. Nay, then fare you well.



ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I—*A Room in the House of EMILIA
and CAROLINA.*

Enter STANFORD, EMILIA, SIR POSITIVE, LADY VAINÉ,
WOODCOCK, and NINNY.



SIR POSIT. Nay then, cousin, I am an ass, an idiot, a blockhead, and a rascal, if I don't understand dramatic poetry of all things in the world. Why, this is the only thing I am esteemed for in England.

Emil. I can hold no longer [*aside*]. This rudeness of yours amazeth me; 'tis beyond all example. Must we be perpetually persecuted by you and your crew? For Heaven's sake leave me.

Sir Posit. Ha, ha, ha! Cousin, thou ralliest well; 'tis true, Woodcock and Ninny will be a little troublesome sometimes; but i'faith they are very honest fellows, give 'em their due.

Emil. Oh, abominable! Worse and worse.

Stanf. Gentlemen! what obligation have we to endure your folly any longer? Must we be forced to leave the world for such importunate fools as you are?

[*To NINNY and WOODCOCK.*

Ninny. What a devil ails he? He's mad; who does he mean by this?

Wood. Nay, 'faith, I don't know, I am sure; he does not mean me, dear heart.

Ninny. Nor me either; take that from me.

Wood. Jack, if thou wilt leave the world, I'll go along with thee, as I told thee, dear heart. But who is't troubles thee, now, bully-rock.

Stanf. All of ye; ye are a pack of the most insupportable fools that e'er had breath; I had rather be at a bear-garden than be in your company.

Ninny. Ha, ha ha! This is very pleasant, i'faith. Call the greatest wits and authors of the nation fools! Ha, ha, ha! That's good, i'faith.

Wood. Nay, perhaps the greatest men of the age. You are a good judge indeed, &c.

Lady Vaine. Nay, Sir Positive, e'en leave her (don't be troublesome) since she desires you. Come, madam, I'll wait upon you, whither you please: we'll enjoy ourselves in private.

Emil. This is worst of all; do you think I can suffer the noise of your tongue for ever with patience?

Lady Vaine. O' my conscience, Sir Positive, she's distracted.

Sir Posit. Yes, madam, if I be a judge, she is; and I defy any one to deceive me in this.

Lady Vaine. It must be so, for she has a vast deal of wit; and great wits, you know, have always a mixture of madness.

Sir Posit. Well, madam! I found that by myself, for I was about three years ago as mad as ever man was. I 'scaped Bedlam very narrowly; 'tis not above a twelve-month since my brains were settled again. But come, madam, I'll wait on your ladyship, for she does not deserve the honour of such company.

Lady Vaine. What shall I do to get rid of him? I shall miss my assignation, if I do not.

Sir Posit. Come, madam. Fare you well! since you are no better company.

[*Exeunt* SIR POSITIVE and LADY VAINÉ.]

let me tell you, madam, though Sir Positive be a rare man, yet my Lady Vaine is a little too talkative ; and there can be no greater trouble to one of sense than that.

Emil. You are the most impertinent of all mankind.

Ninny. Oh, madam ! you are pleased to say so——

Emil. You are a most abominable fool, and the worst poet in Christendom : I had rather read the history of Tom Thumb than the best of your poems.

Ninny. Oh, madam ! you are pleasant, but this won't pass.

Emil. Such ridiculous insipid rhymes are you author of, that I am confident you are that incorrigible scribbler that furnishes the bellman of this Ward

Ninny. Ha, ha, ha ! &c. Madam, as I hope to breathe, you droll very well ; this is the prettiest humour in the world.

Enter LOVEL and CAROLINA.

Stanf. O Heaven ! what will become of me ?

Car. Is not this extremely pleasant ?

Lov. There was never anything equal to't.

Emil. Your verses are such as schoolboys ought to be whipped for.

Ninny. This will not stir me, madam, I know you are not in earnest.

Emil. And your plays are below the dignity of a mountebank's stage. Salvator Winter would have refused them.

Ninny. Nay, madam, never talk of that, I'll show you a Play I have about me. Come, madam, we'll read it ; here's the most glorious conceits, the most powerful touches ; in a word, 'tis a Play that shall read and act with any Play that ever was born—I mean, conceived.

Wood. Come on, Jack !

Stanf. Ah ! dear Lovel, use some means for my delivery, or I am ruined for ever. For, if I should go,

they would not leave me, they are so barbarously cruel in their persecutions.

Wood. Nay, never speak of that, madam; before George you will bring your judgment in question, if you condemn Ninny's Plays, dear heart.

Emil. Away, you coxcomb! you are ten times a more ridiculous 'squire, than he's a poet.

Wood. Ha, ha, ha! By the Lord Harry, this is a strange humour of hers, as ever I saw in my life. Well, madam, you will have your frolic; but come, Ninny, we'll e'en take our leaves.

Ninny. Ay, ay, come; your humble servants.

Wood. Your servant, dear hearts; this is the pleasantest humour in the world.

Ninny. Ay, is't not? Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exeunt NINNY and WOODCOCK laughing.*]

Stanf. Oh, friend, I have been more inhumanly used, than ever bawd was by the fury of the 'prentices.

Lov. Still I say, laugh at 'em, as I do.

Car. Let's leave them, Lovel, for they are in such humours, they are only fit for one another's company.

Lov. With all my heart, madam.

[*Exeunt LOVEL and CAROLINA.*]

Emil. Well! I will leave the world immediately.

Stanf. Which way do you intend to go?

Emil. Why do you ask?

Stanf. That I may be sure to take another way.

Emil. Nothing could so soon persuade me to tell you as that.

Stanf. What, are they gone? They have ~~looked~~ the door too!

Emil. I wonder what they leave us alone for.

Stanf. Heaven knows, unless it be to be troublesome to one another, as they have been to us.

[*They walk up and down and take little notice of one another.*]

Stanf. You most reason? When did you see a man so foolish as a woman?

Emil. When I see you.

Stanf. No, no, none of our sex will dispute folly with any of yours.

Emil. That's hard. I find nothing but owls among the best of you: your young men are all positive, forward, conceited coxcombs; and your old men all formal nothings, that would have sullen gravity mistaken for wisdom.

Stanf. This is not altogether so much impertinence as I expected from one of your sex. But, let me tell you, I have too often suffered by women, not to fear the best of 'em: there being nothing to be found in the most of the sex but vanity, pride, envy, and hypocrisy, uncertainty and giddiness of humour: the furious desires of the young make 'em fit to be seduced by the flesh, as the envy and malice of the old prepare 'em to be led away by the devil.

Emil. I must confess I don't perceive yet that you are altogether so ridiculous as the rest of mankind; but, let me tell you, I have reason to fear you will be so; perhaps your impertinence is an ague, that haunts you by fits.

Stanf. That disease, in the best of women, is quotidian; and if you be not infected, you must be the most extraordinary woman in the world.

Emil. I would give money to see a man that is not so, as the rabble do to see a monster, since all men I have ever seen are most intolerable fops. Would it not distract one to see gentlemen of £5,000 a year write Plays, and as poets venture their reputations against a sum of money, they venture theirs against nothing? Others learn ten years to play o' the fiddle and to paint, and at last an ordinary fiddler or sign-painter, that makes it his business, shall out-do 'em all.

Stanf. This looks like sense; I find she does understand something. [*Aside.*

Emil. Others, after twenty or thirty years' study in philosophy, arrive no further than at the weighing of carps, the invention of a travelling wheel, or the poisoning of a cat with the oil of tobacco; these are your wits and virtuosos. '.

Stanf. I must confess, this is not so ill as I expected from you; but it does not less distract me to see a young lady fall in love with a vain empty fellow not worth a groat, perhaps for dancing of a jig, or singing of a stanza of fashionable nonsense: another, on the contrary, so insatiably covetous for money to marry old age, infirmity, and diseases; and the same bait, that persuades them to matrimony, shall entice 'em into adultery.

Emil. This is not so foppish as I believed; yet, though this be a great truth, 'tis a very impertinent thing of you to tell me what I know already.

Stanf. How the devil should I know that? I am sure not many of your sex are guilty of so much discretion as to discern these things.

Emil. I am sure you have not much, that cannot distinguish between those that have and have not.

Stanf. I must confess I am a little surprised to find a woman have so little vanity. I could never endure the society of any of the sex better than yours.

Emil. To be plain with you, you are not so troublesome a fop as I have seen.

Stanf. What the devil makes me think this woman not impertinent? and yet I cannot help it; what an owl am I! [*Aside.*

Emil. I have been so cruelly tormented, and without intermission too, that this seems some refreshment to me.

Stanf. [*aside*]. Why should I be caught thus? But I'll keep my folly to myself. [*To her.*] I can bear this with a little more patience, but if you should grow much

impertinent, I should venture to break open the door of my liberty, I can assure you.

Emil. Pray Heaven you don't give me the first occasion [*to him*]. Well, I know not what's the matter, but I like this man strangely; but what a fool am I!

[*Aside.*

Stanf. How like a woodcock am I ensnared! [*To himself.*] A curse on Lovel for leaving me alone with her!

Emil. What, do they intend to keep us prisoners for ever? [*To him.*

Stanf. [*aside*]. I care not how long. [*To her.*] I think they intend to deal with us as they do with juries, shut us up till we agree in our verdict.

Emil. That would be longer than the siege of Troy lasted.

Stanf. This is not half so bad though as our late persecutions, that's one comfort.

Emil. It fares with me like one upon a rack, that is a little loosened from his pains; 'tis pleasure to him when he compares his torments, though those he has left may be intolerable too.

Stanf. In this we agree, though in nothing else.

Emil. I would to Heaven we did in all things. [*Aside.*] I am tormented with myself, that am forced by the ridiculous custom of women to dissemble, and that way endure my own foppery—Ah, dear Stanford! [*Aside.*

Stanf. How now! she smiled, and suddenly checked the liberty she took. [*Aside.*

Emil. O Heaven! I fear he has discovered something. [*Aside.*

Stanf. There must be something in't. I like her very well, but am resolved not to disclose it, whate'er comes on't; for that will make her vain, though she be not already [*Aside.*

Emil. I could find in my heart to give you enough.

Stanf. Nay, I doubt not but 'tis in your nature. What can the meaning of this be? Is there nothing but riddle in woman? [*Aside.*

Enter HUFFE and unlocks the door, and ROGER after him, and lays hold on him.

Rog. Hold, hold, Mr. Huffe; my master charged me of all men living to keep you out of his sight.

Huffe. Prithee stand by, you saucy coxcomb!

Rog. Nay, sir, be not so boisterous; upon my word, you pass no further.

Huffe. Prithee, dear Roger, don't put this upon me.

Rog. My master says, it costs him two pieces a time to be rid of you.

Huffe. Prithee let me go, and you shall go my halves.

Rog. Are you in earnest?

Huffe. Yes, upon my honour.

Rog. Nay, then speed ye; but be sure you sink nothing. [*Exit ROGER.*

Huffe. I warrant you.

Stanf. Is he here? Hold, hold hold; here's your two pieces, don't trouble me now.

Huffe. Your humble servant, I'll return 'em again to-morrow without fail—ha! Do they come so easily? There are more from whence these came. Oh, sir, I'll tell you, I have had the severest fortune that ever man had.

Stanf. Away, away.

Huffe. For Heaven's sake hear; it's the most prodigious thing you ever heard.

Emil. What will this world come to?

Huffe. I was playing at backgammon for my dinner, which I won; and from thence we came to five up, for half a piece; of the first set I had three for love, and lost it; of the second I gammoned him, and threw

Stanf. Oh, devil! Is this the miraculous thing you would tell me? Farewell.

Huffe. Hold, hold, sir! you don't hear the end on't.

Stanf. Neither do I desire it, sir.

Huffe. I'll tell you, sir; of the fourth set I was four to two; and for the last game my tables were filled up, and I had born my three odd men; so that, you know, I had two upon every point.

Emil. Oh, insufferable! though I feel enough myself, yet I cannot but pity Stanford. [To herself.

Stanf. Oh, damned impertinence! Sir, I tell you, I don't understand backgammon.

Huffe. Not understand backgammon! Sir, that you may understand well what I say, I'll tell you what backgammon is.

Emil. That is worse than t'other. Sure Stanford has some charm about him, that I can suffer this rather than leave him. [To herself.

Stanf. I desire none of your instructions.

Huffe. Well, then, as I was saying, I had just two upon every point, and he had two men to enter; and as the devil would have it, my next throw was size-ace; he entered one of his men a size; then, Mr. Stanford, to see the damned luck on't, I threw size-cinque next, and the very next throw he entered upon a cinque, and having his game very backward, won the game; and afterwards he set so, that I lost every penny.

Stanf. This will distract me! What the devil's this to me?

Huffe. No, but did you ever hear the like in your life?

Stanf. This puts me beyond all patience.

Huffe. But this was not all; for just in the nick came she, that nursed my three last children that were born without wedlock, and threatened to turn 'em upon my hands if I did not pay her. 'Faith, Mr. Stanford, three

Stanf. Yes, that, that's fitter for you.

Huffe. What is that, dear heart?

Stanf. 'Tis that, sir.

[*Kicks him*

Huffe. That, sir? I don't understand you; if you go to that, sir, there's a business indeed. What do you mean by this? What, would you make a quarrel, sir? You'll never leave these tricks: I have told you of 'em often enough. What the devil do you mean by that?

Stanf. Let this expound my meaning.

[*Kicks him again.*

Huffe. 'Slife, sir, I don't understand you; an' ye talk of these things, and these businesses. Sir, I'd have you know I scorn to be kicked, as much as any man breathing, sir; an' you be at that sport, your servant, your servant, sir.

Enter ROGER at the door.

Rog. Come, Mr. Huffe, divide.

Huffe. Divide! There's one for you [*gives ROGER a kick*], for two of 'em was all I got.

Rog. This you might have kept to yourself, if you had pleased; but d'ye think I'll be served thus?

Huffe. Let me go.

Rog. I'll not leave you so.

[*Exeunt ROGER and HUFFE.*

Emil. Why don't you go? The door's open now, sir.

Stanf. I am afraid I shall light into worse company.

Emil. Oh, sir, that's impossible!

Stanf. How vain is this of you! Now, would you give me a fair occasion to flatter you; but I can assure you you shall miss of your design.

Emil. [*aside*]. Well, this is an extraordinary man; I love the very sight of him. [*To him.*] I wonder, sir, you'll be foppish to imagine I love to be flattered; I hate flatterers worse than our new poets.

Emil. Well, sir, farewell. [*Aside.*] And yet I would not leave him. [*She offers to go out.*]

Stanf. You'd e'en as good stay, madam, while you are well. You may perhaps, if you go, encounter some of your persecutors.

Emil. I'd rather stay here than venture that; my trouble is not here so insupportable.

Stanf. [*aside*]. She must be a rare woman! [*To her.*] Nor perhaps is not like to be, unless it comes from yourself; but I think there's less vanity in you than in most women I have seen.

Emil. This is a most excellent person. [*Aside.*]

Stanf. Dear Emilia! [*Aside.*] O Heaven! is he here!

Enter SIR POSITIVE.

Sir Posit. Jack, hark ye.

Stanf. For Heaven's sake! I have business.

Sir Posit. 'Tis all one for that, sir; why, I'll tell you.

Stanf. Another time, I beseech you; don't interrupt me now.

Sir Posit. 'Faith, but I must interrupt you.

Emil. What can be the matter? He listens to him! [*Aside.*]

Stanf. 'Slife, why should you put this upon me now?

Sir Posit. If you refuse me, I'll blast your reputation.

Stanf. [*aside*]. What shall I do? Though this be a coxcomby knight, yet the puppy's stout. [*To him.*] Are you so cunning in persecuting me, to put a thing upon me I cannot refuse? Well, sir, remember this.

Emil. What can this mean? [*Aside.*]

Stanf. Come, sir, I'll follow you; but a curse upon you for finding me out. Madam, as soon as I have dispatched this business, 'tis possible I may see you again.

Emil. But 'tis not. I'll assure you: I'll never see the

Stanf. How ridiculous is this of you to judge of a thing before you know the bottom on't.

Sir Posit. Come, Stanford, prithee come away.

[*Exeunt.*]

Emil. Have I found you? This fellow's as bad as any, and without doubt did but counterfeit his humour, to insinuate himself into my good opinion. What lucky accident is this, has undeceived me! I felt a passion growing in me, might else have proved dangerous.—
Luce!

Enter LUCE.

Luce. Madam.

Emil. Fetch my hoods and scarfs, I'll take a walk in the fields.

[*Exit* LUCE.]

Enter LOVEL and CAROLINA.

Car. How, sister! What, have you lost your gallant?

Emil. O sister, I thank you for locking me up with that fellow; well, the time may come when I may be quit with you.

[*Exit.*]

Car. I wonder how the door came open; I believe there has been hard bickering betwixt 'em. But I find my sister is conqueror, and your friend is fled for the same.

Lov. Farewell he; let us mind ourselves. Come, 'faith, madam, why should you and I hover so long about this matrimony; like a cast of falcons about a heron, that dare not stoop?

Car. O, sir, the quarry does not countervail the danger.

Lov. I'll warrant you, madam; but let's rally no longer; there is a parson at Knightsbridge that yokes all stray people together; we'll to him, he'll dispatch us presently, and send us away as lovingly as any two fools that ever yet were condemned to marriage.

Car. I should be inclinable enough to cast myself upon you; but I am afraid you are so far gone with my Lady Vaine, you can never come off with her.

soon forget your kindness to her ; and if, after we are yoked, as you call it, you should draw that way, I should draw another ; then our yoke would go near to throttle us.

Lov. 'Faith, some would think it much the easier if 'twere wide enough to draw both ways. But, madam, will you never be serious with me ?

Car. I know you cannot love me ; she's your delight.

Lov. Yes, yes, I delight in her as I do in the tooth-ache ; I love her immoderately, as an English tailor loves a French tailor that's set up the next door to him.

Car. Sir, to keep you no longer in suspense, I am resolved never to marry without my father's consent.

Lov. Madam, I'll not despair of obtaining that.

Car. He has vowed never to marry me till he has disposed of my elder sister.

Lov. Will you assure me to make me happy when that's done ?

Car. I think I may safely promise anything against that time ; for as long as my sister has these melancholic humours, she's far enough from that danger.

Lov. I warrant you I'll make a match yet between Stanford and her.

Car. That's impossible, unless you can alter their natures ; for, though neither finds impertinence in themselves, they'll find it in one another ; besides, their very principles are against all society.

Lov. Well, madam, I have a way to make 'em stark mad in love with one another ; or at least fetch 'em out of their sullenness. We will perpetually bait 'em with our fools, and by that we shall either plague 'em out of their humour, or at least make their fellow-sufferings be a means to endear 'em one to another. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR POSITIVE, STANFORD, and two clerks.

Sir Posit. Now will I firk my two clerks.

Stanf. Hang the cause, we come to fight.

Sir Posit. Why, I'll tell you the cause, sir.

Stanf. By no means, Sir Positive ; we come to fight here, not to tell stories.

Sir Posit. We'll fight too ; but, by your leave, I'll tell the cause first, an you were my father.

Stanf. Hold, sir ; think upon your honour ; this is no place for words ; let your sword speak your mind.

Sir Posit. Sir, by your pardon, I am resolved to satisfy 'em ; no man in England knows how to manage these things better than myself. Take that from me.

Stanf. Oh, horrid impertinence ! I fear these fools' tongues more than I can their swords.

Sir Posit. Sir, no man in England would put up this affront ; why, look you, sir, for him to sit in the eighteenpence gallery, pray mark me, and rail at my Play aloud the first day, and did all that lay in his power to damn it. And let me tell you, sir, if in any dramatic poem there has been such breaks, such characters, such figures, such images, such heroic patterns, such heights, such flights, such intrigues, such surprises, such fire, salt, and flame, then I am no judge ; I understand nothing in this world.

Stanf. What a cause his valour has found out ! and how he cants too ! What an owl was I, to come along with him ! Sir Positive, dispatch. Come, come, gentlemen.

Sir Posit. Hold a little——

2nd Clerk. Why, look you, Mr. Timothy, this is a very honest and ingenious gentleman, for aught I see.

1st Clerk. 'Tis true, I sate in the eighteenpence gallery, but I was so far from railing against your Play, that I cried it up at high as I could.

Sir Posit. How high did you cry it up ?

1st Clerk. Why, as high as the upper gallery, I am sure of that.

1st Clerk. Sir, I'll hold you twenty pound I don't lie. Sir, were you there? Did you hear me? This is the strangest thing in the world.

Stanf. Will nothing make these rogues fight? You are both rascally cowards.

2nd Clerk. 'Tis strange you should say so; you are very uncharitable. Do you know either of us?

Stanf. Oh, insufferable! what sons of whores has he picked up, and what an occasion too!

Sir Posit. Why, do you say you did not rail? Did not I sit just under you, in the pit?

2nd Clerk. Lord! who would expect to see a poet in the pit at his own Play?

Sir Posit. Did not you say, "Fie upon't, that shall not pass?"

Stanf. Gentlemen, either fight quickly—

Sir Posit. Hold, hold, let him speak; what can you say? Do gentlemen write to oblige the world, and do such as you traduce 'em?—ha——

1st Clerk. Sir, I'll tell you; you had made a lady in your Play so unkind to her lover (who, methought, was a very honest, well-meaning gentleman) to command him to hang himself; said I then, "That shall not pass," thinking, indeed, the gentleman would not have done it; but he indeed did it; then said I, "Fie upon't, that he should be so much overtaken."

Sir Posit. Overtaken! that's good, i'faith; why, you had as good call the gentleman fool: and 'tis the best character in all my Play. D'ye think I'll put that up?

1st Clerk. Not I, sir, as I hope to live; I would not call the gentleman fool for all the world; but 'tis strange a man must pay eighteenpence, and must not speak a word for't.

Sir Posit. Not when gentlemen write; take that from me.

2nd Clerk. No! I would they would let it alone

mad to see the invincible ignorance of this age. Now for him to hang himself at the command of his mistress, there's the surprise; and I'll be content to hang myself if ever that was shown upon a stage before. Besides, 'twas an heroic, Cato-like action; and there's great love and honour to be shown in a man's hanging himself for his mistress—take that from me.

Stanf. Oh, horrid! this magisterial coxcomb will defend anything.

Sir Posit. What do you think, Stanford? You are a great judge.

Stanf. I think a halter is not so honourable as a poniard, and therefore not so fit to express love and honour with.

Sir Posit. Ha, ha, ha, to see your mistake! Now that's the only thing in the Play I took pains for; I could have made it otherwise with ease; but I will give you seventeen reasons why a halter's better than a poniard. First, I'll show you the posture of hanging; look, d'ye mind me? It is the posture of a pensive dejected lover, with his hands before him, and his head aside, thus.

Stanf. I would you had a halter, you would demonstrate it more clearly.

Sir Posit. 'Faith, and would I had, I'd show it you to the life. But secondly——

Stanf. Hold, sir; I am convinced. To our fighting business again; but they have given you full satisfaction, let's away——

Sir Posit. No, no; hold a little.

Stanf. A curse on him! Did I leave Emilia for this?

Sir Posit. Sir, if you'll set your hand to this certificate I'll be satisfied; otherwise you must take what follows.

1st Clerk. Sir! with all my heart; I'll do anything to serve you.

resolved, if we had fought, and I had disarmed him, I'd have made him to do it, before I'd have given him his life. How do you write yourself?

1st Clerk. Timothy Scribble, a justice of peace his clerk.

Sir Posit. Here, read it, and set your hand to it.

1st Clerk [reads]: "I do acknowledge and firmly believe that the Play of Sir Positive At-all, Knight, called 'The Lady in the Lobster,' notwithstanding it was damned by the malice of the age, shall not only read, but it shall act, with any of Ben Jonson's and Beaumont's and Fletcher's Plays——"

Sir Posit. Hold, hold! I'll have Shakespear's in; 'slife, I had like to have forgot that.

1st Clerk [reads]: With all my heart. "I do likewise hereby attest that he is no purloiner of other men's works, the general fame and opinion notwithstanding; and that he is a poet, mathematician, divine, statesman, lawyer, physician, geographer, musician, and indeed a *unus in omnibus* through all arts and sciences, and hereunto I have set my hand the day of

1st Clerk. With all my heart.

Sir Posit. Come, sir, do you witness it.

2nd Clerk. Ay, sir. [*He sets his hand.*]

Sir Posit. In presence of Jacob Dash.

1st Clerk. Look you, sir, I write an indifferent good hand. If you have any occasion to command me, inquire at the stationer's at Furnival's Inn——

Stanf. Why, you impudent rascals! How dare you come into the field? Must I be diverted thus long by you? [*Offers to kick them.*]

Sir Posit. Hold, Stanford! I cannot in honour suffer that. Now, they are my friends, and after this satisfaction, I am bound in honour to defend 'em to the last drop of blood.

Stanf. Oh, intolerable!

to play a match at trap-ball, for a dish of steaks at Gloster Hall, and here you found us.

Sir Posit. Have you the confidence to talk of trap-ball before me? Nay, now you are my enemies again. Hark you, Stanford, I'll play with 'em both for £5,000. Why, I was so eminent at it when I was a schoolboy, that I was called Trap Positive all over the school.

Stanf. Then farewell, good Sir Positive Trap.

Sir Posit. Dear Stanford, stay but one quarter of an hour, and you shall see how I'll dishonour them both at trap-ball. They talk of trap-ball! Ha! ha! ha!

Stanf. 'Slife! what will become of me? Out of the field, you inconsiderable rascals! Must I be diverted thus by you? [They run out. Exeunt omnes.]

Enter EMILIA and her MAID at one door, NINNY and WOODCOCK at the other.

Emil. I thought we might have been free here. And here are these puppies.

Wood. Let's aboard of 'em, whoever they are. Fa, la, la! how now, dear hearts? By the Lord Harry, it's pity you should walk without a couple of servants; here's a couple of bully-rocks will serve your turn, as well as two of buckram, dear hearts.

Emil. O Heaven! [Aside.]

Luce. Gentlemen, this is very rude! We shall have them come, shall thank you for't.

Ninny. As I hope to breathe, ladies, you look the prettiest in vizard masks of any ladies in England.

Wood. And now you talk of masks, I'll show you an admirable song upon a vizard mask, dear hearts, of poet Ninny's making.

Emil. Oh, abominable impudence!

Wood. But I must beg your pardon, that I cannot

Luce. You sing it to the maids of honour!

Wood. But if I had a violin here, no man in England can express anything more lusciously upon that than myself; ask Ninny else.

Ninny. Yes, ladies; he has great power upon the violin. He has the best double relish in gamut of any man in England; but for the little finger on the left hand no man in Europe outdoes him.

Wood. You may believe him, dear hearts; for he's a good judge of music, and as pretty a poet as ever writ couplet.

Emil. Oh, horrid! What's this? There's no way to escape but to discover ourselves!

[*They pull off their masks.*]

Ninny. Emilia! What shall I do? I am undone! She'll never own me again.

Emil. Farewell, you baboons, and learn better manners.

Wood. 'Slife, she'll take me for a whore-master. I am nipped in the very blossom of my hopes.

Ninny. For Heaven's sake, pardon me, madam!

Emil. Let me go.

Wood. No, madam; we'll wait on your ladyship home.

Emil. This is worse and worse.

Enter HUFFE.

Huffe. Heart! if I put up this I give him leave to use me worse than a bailiff that arrests in the inns of court.

Wood. Why, what's the matter?

Huffe. 'Slife! kick a man of honour as I am I'll pistol him pissing against a wall.

Luce. Ay, then or never, to my knowledge.

Wood. What's the business, dear heart, ha?

Huffe. Sir, I'll tell you.

Emil. This is a lucky occasion.

Ninny. Are you gone? I'll follow you.

[*Exit* NINNY.]

Huffe. I had occasion for four or five pieces, to make up a sum with, and went to borrow it of him; and he, like an uncivil fellow as he was——

Wood. What did he?

Huffe. Why, I did but turn my back, and he, like an ill-bred sot, gives me a kick of the breech. I'll cut his throat, if I should meet him in a church.

Wood. This will be an ill business. I am sorry for my friend Jack Stanford, for Master Huffe's honour is disturbed, and I fear he'll revenge it bloodily, for he understands punctilios to a hair; but I'll endeavour to prevent it, however.

[*Aside.*

Huffe. If he be above ground, I'll cut his throat for it; I'll teach him to use a man of honour thus. If he had pleased, he might have dealt with me at another rate. As I hope to live, I had a fighting sword by my side near six foot long at that very time; and he to kick a man! Pshaw! He does not understand his business, but I shall find him presently.

[*Exit* HUFFE.]

Enter NINNY.

Ninny. Pox on it, Woodcock, she would not let me go with her.

Wood. Prithee, dear heart, see if thou can't find Jack Stanford in the fields, while I go and see if I can find him in the town.

Ninny. What's the matter?

Wood. 'Tis a business concerns his life, dear heart. Ask no questions; but if you find him bring him to the "Sun."

[*Exit* NINNY.]

Ninny. What can this be?

But I'll go see if I can find him out,

So to be sure of what I'm to do.



ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of EMILIA and CAROLINA.*

Enter LADY VAINÉ and CAROLINA.



LADY VAINÉ. Come, madam, I am not so blind but I have discovered something.

Car. What have you discovered, madam?

Lady Vaine. Let me tell you, madam, 'tis not for your honour to give meetings privately to Master Lovel.

Car. Why, madam, if I should, are you concerned in it?

Lady Vaine. Yes, madam. First in my good wishes to your ladyship, I would not have the world blame your conduct, nor that you should have the least blemish in your honour; but that your fame and virtue should continue unspotted and undefiled, as your ladyship's beauty is.

Car. Fear not, madam. I'll warrant you I'll secure my honour without your instructions.

Enter LOVEL softly, and comes just behind them.

Lady Vaine. But, madam, let me tell you again, no woman has really that right in Master Lovel that I have.

heard sermons, he would never have been so wicked and perfidious to a poor innocent woman as I am.

Lov. This is very fine, i'faith! [To himself.]

Lady Vaine. Madam, he protested all the honourable kindness in the world to me, and has received favours from me I shall not mention at this time; and now he has raised the siege from before me and laid it to your ladyship.

Car. I cannot imagine what you mean by this.

Lady Vaine. And, madam, to confess my weakness to you, I must needs say, I love him of all men in the world.

Car. Well, madam, since you do, I'll resign my interest in the gentleman you speak of: here he is.

Lady Vaine. Oh Heaven! am I betrayed? Well, madam, I shall acquaint your father with your amour.

Lov. Hold, madam; if you do, perhaps I may whisper something in Sir Positive's ear.

Lady Vaine, Sir! you will not be so ungenerous to boast of a lady's kindness. If he should say the least thing in the world, after my unhandsome leaving of him just now, it would incense him past reconciliation; what a confusion am I in! [Exit LADY VAINE.]

Lov. Is not this very pleasant, madam?

Car. I wonder, sir, after what has now passed, you have the confidence to look me in the face.

Lov. I like this raillery very well, madam.

Car. I can assure you, you shall have no reason to think I rally with you.

Lov. Certainly you cannot be in earnest.

Car. Upon my word, you shall find I am; I will have nothing to do with any man that's engaged already.

Lov. You amaze me, madam.

Car. I'll never see you more.

Enter STANFORD.

Stanf. Oh friend? I'm glad I've found you.

mistress, if I do not get rid of him ; but I have a trick for him. [*Aside.*

Stanf. Would this woman were away, that I might acquaint you with the greatest concernment I ever had !

Lov. Step into that chamber quickly, and I'll get rid of her, and come to you.

Stanf. With all my heart. [*Exit* STANFORD.

Lov. Certainly, madam, you cannot know this woman so little, as to give her credit : I'll tell you what she is.

Car. I am very glad I know you so well. Do you think I'll be put off with a remnant of your love ?

Enter ROGER.

Rog. O ! Master Lovel ! Is my master here ? I have lost him these two hours.

Lov. Ay, ay. But, madam, for Heaven's sake hear me !

Car. Trouble me no more.

[*Exit* CAROLINA, LOVEL *follows* her.

Rog. Where is this master of mine ? I have been seeking him these two hours, and cannot light on him.

Enter HUFFE.

Huffe. Oh, Roger ! where's your master ?

Rog. Oh, sir ! you shall excuse me for that.

Huffe. Prithee, dear rogue, tell me ; 'twill be better for thee.

Rog. No, no, that won't do ; you were not so just to me last time.

Huffe. Upon my honour, I was ; why should'st thou distrust thy friend ?

Rog. Come, sir, don't think to wheedle me at this rate !

Huffe. I am a son of a whore if I was not just to you. But prithee bring me to him once more : I am sure to

Rog. Well! I'll trust you once more: go, and stay for me in the hall, and I'll come to you, when I have found my master, who is somewhere in this house.

Huffe. Well! I'll wait for you. [Exit.]

Rog. My comfort is, if he gets money, I may have my share; if not, he ventures a kicking again, and I venture nothing.

Enter STANFORD and EMILIA.

Rog. Oh! Sir! I have been seeking you these two hours, and here's Master Lovel in the house.

Stanf. You rascal, must you trouble me too?

[Offers to strike him.]

Emil. He does not trouble you more than you do me.

Stanf. Now you are like a young hound, that runs away with a false scent.

Emil. For Heaven's sake leave me!

Stanf. Nay, this is like a woman, to condemn a man unheard.

Emil. Must I be for ever pestered with impertinent people?

Stanf. If you were not so yourself, you would not think me so; but she that has the yellow jaundice thinks everything yellow which she sees.

Emil. Is it possible you can have the impudence to endeavour to justify your folly?

Stanf. Not that I care much for satisfying you, but to vindicate myself from the unjust aspersion. Know it was my honour obliged me to go along with that fool.

Emil. Out of my sight! Are you one of those fops, that talk of honour?

Stanf. Is that a thing so despicable with you? He asked me to be his second, which I could not in honour refuse.

Emil. Granting that barbarous custom of duels, can anything be so ridiculous as to venture your life for

Stanf. I like this woman more and more, like a sot as I am ; sure there is witchcraft in't. [Aside.

Emil. But to do the greatest act of friendship in the world, for the greatest owl in nature !

Enter HUFFE.

Huffe. Oh, Mr. Stanford, I have a business to impart to you.

Stanf. Oh, insufferable ! Have you the impudence to trouble me again ?

Emil. I know not what's the matter, but I cannot but have some inclination to this fellow yet ! [Aside.

Huffe. I am going into the city, where I shall have the rarest bubble that ever man had ; he was set me by a renegado linendraper, that failed last year in his credit, and has now no other trade but to start the game, whilst we pursue the chase. 'This is one of those fellows that draw the youth of the city into our decoy, and perpetually walk up and down seeking for a prey.

Stanf. Begone ! and leave me.

Huffe. But you know, a man must have a little gold to show, to bait the rogues withal.

Stanf. Out, you unseasonable rascal, I'll send you hence. [Draws.

Huffe. Nay, 'tis not that, sir, can fright me ; but that I would not disturb the lady, I'd make you know.

Stanf. You impudent villain, I'll send you further.

[Follows HUFFE, who runs away huffing.

Huffe. Nay, sir, your humble servant, an you go to that, sir ; I care as little for a sword, sir, as any man upon earth. I fear your sword ? Who dares say it ? Your servant, your servant. [Exit HUFFE.

Emil. This is not altogether so foolish as fighting in Sir Positive's quarrel.

Stanf. Sir Positive's quarrel. 'Twas in effect my

opportunity to vent my indignation upon one of those many that have tormented me. I had rather fight with them all, than converse with them.

Emil. But you may choose whether you will do either.

Stanf. Yes, as much as choose whether I'll breathe or no.

Emil. But how could you be sure to meet with such an one?

Stanf. What a question is that? Is it not above five thousand to one odds?

Emil. [*aside*]. I am glad he has brought himself well off; for I must like him, do what I can: he must be a man of sense. I must confess, the business is not altogether so ill as I imagined. [*To him.*

Stanf. Now, madam, who is impertinent, you or I?

Emil. You are, to say the same thing twice to me.

Stanf. Well! this is a rare woman: what a quick apprehension she has! I love her strangely; the more coxcomb I, that I should be drawn in, of all men living! [*Aside.*

Enter WOODCOCK.

Wood. O dear heart, have I met with thee? I have been seeking thee all the town over.

Stanf. Heart! What's this? I was going in great haste, just as you came. Adieu.

Wood. Ah, dear Jack, I have not so little honour as to leave thee in this condition.

Stanf. Good sir! what condition? I am not drunk, am I?

Wood. No, gad, would it were no worse, dear heart!

Stanf. It cannot be worse; do not trouble me.

Wood. No, I'll tell thee, Jack [*Embraces and kisses him.*] Huffe threatens thee to cut thy throat wherever he meets thee; and I came my dear hulkhead to off th'

Stanf. For Heaven's sake, put not this upon me. Do you think he, that would be kicked without resistance, dares do anything?

Wood. But look you, dear heart. Lord, this is the strangest thing in the world; you had ladies with you, and you know it had been an uncivil thing to have turned again then, Jack. But now he's resolved to have satisfaction, he told me so; and, if I can see as far into a millstone as another, he's no bully Sandy.

Stanf. Trouble me no more. Begone——

Wood. Ay, ay, thou dost this now to try whether I have so little honour as to quit thee, but it won't pass, my dear rascal. Kiss me; I'll live and die with thee.

Stanf. Sir, let me tell you, this is very rude. And upon my word I have no quarrel, unless you'll force one upon me.

Emil. Still do I like this man better and better. [*Aside.*

Wood. Nay, then I smell a rat. Farewell, Jack.
Servant, dear hearts. [*Exit* WOODCOCK.

Enter LOVEI, CAROLINA, ROGER.

Car. But are you sure my Lady Vaine is such a one?

Lov. Yes, that I am, my little peevish, jealous mistress.

Car. Yes, yes, I have reason to be jealous of such a treasure as you are. But, pray, to satisfy a little scruple I have, see her no more.

Stanf. We had best change the scene, I think. What if you should walk out a little?

Emil. I care not much, if I do.

Stanf. I could find in my heart to go along with you.

Emil. Yes, and leave me again for your honour, forsooth.

Stanf. How devilishly impertinent is this for you to

Enter Sir POSITIVE.

Car. Agreed. And to our wish, here comes my cousin Positive.

Sir Posit. Oh! Have I found you? I'll tell you the pleasantest thing in the world.

Stanf. Sir, I am just going to a lawyer of the Temple, to ask his counsel.

Sir Posit. Pshaw! pshaw! save thy money; what needst thou do that? I'll do it for you. Why, I have more law than ever Coke upon Littleton had. You must know, I am so eminent at that, that the greatest lawyers in England come to me for advice in matters of difficulty. Come, state your case, let's hear't, come——Hold, hold, cousin, whither are you going? [*EMILIA offers to go out.*

Emil. Let me go. I am going in haste to bespeak a seal.

Sir Posit. A seal? Why, dost thou know what thou dost now? To go about that without my advice! Well, I have given Symons and all of 'em such lessons, as I have made 'em stand in admiration of my judgment. Do you know that I'll cut a seal with any man in England for a thousand pound?

Rog. I have my lesson; I'll warrant you I'll do it. [*Exit.*

Emil. O Heaven! I must go now to bespeak it; I am to send it immediately to my sister at the English nunnery in Bruges.

Sir Posit. Bruges! Ah, dear Bruges! Now you talk of Bruges, I am writing this night to Castel Rodrigo. You must know, I have thought of their affairs, and considered them thoroughly; and just this very afternoon I have found out such a way for them to preserve Flanders from the French, I defy all mankind for such an invention. And I think I offer him very fair if he will let me divide the Government with him, I'll do it; otherwise, if Flanders be lost, it is a great loss to the crown.

Stanf. That thou should'st be so very foppish to ask questions!

Sir Posit. I'll tell you. I will this year, pray mark me, I will bring one hundred thousand men in the field, d'ye see.

Car. But where will you have these men, cousin?

Sir Posit. Have 'em! Pshaw! pshaw! let me alone for that. I tell thee, Stanford, I will bring one hundred thousand men into the field, sixty thousand in one complete body, and forty thousand for a flying army, with which I will enter into the very body of all France.

Stanf. Oh, devil! I had rather Flanders should be lost than hear any more on't.

Sir Posit. But this would signify nothing, unless it were done by one that understands the conduct of an army; which if I do not, let the world judge. But to satisfy you, I'll tell you what I'll do, pray mark me. I will take threescore thousand Spanish soldiers, and fight with sixty thousand French, and cut 'em off every man. Pray observe one, this is demonstration; then will I take those very numerical individual Frenchmen I spoke of.

Stanf. What, after you have cut 'em off every man?

Sir Posit. Pish, what dost talk, man? What's matter, whether it be before or after? That's not the point. Pshaw, prithee don't thee trouble thyself for that, I'll do't, man. I will take those very sixty thousand French, and fight with a Spanish army of one hundred thousand, and by my extraordinary conduct destroy them all; this is demonstration, nothing can be plainer than this? By this you may guess whether I may not be a considerable man to that nation or no. Nay, more than that, I'll undertake, if I were in Candia, the Grand Vizier would sooner expose himself to the fury of the Janizaries than besiege the town while I were in't.

Emil. I cannot tell whether I am more tormented with

Sir Posit. But, as I was saying, cousin Emilia, I will have one hundred thousand men in the field, and I will man the garrisons to the full. Besides, pray observe, I will have an infinite store of provision everywhere, and pay all my soldiers to a penny duly.

Car. But where's the money to do this, cousin?

Emil. What shall I do? Whither shall I turn me?

Stanj. Ah, dear Emilia!

Sir Posit. Where's the money? That's a good one 'faith—— Prithee, dear cousin, do thou mind thy guitar; thou dost not understand these things.

Stanf. I am sure, I understand you to be the greatest coxcomb in nature.

Sir Posit. Then I will make you me a league offensive and defensive with the King of England, the Emperor and Princes of Germany, the Kings of Sweden and Denmark, the Kings of Portugal and Poland, Prester John, and the Great Cham, the States of Holland, the Grand Duke of Muscovy, the Great Turk, with two or three Christian Princes more, that shall be nameless and if, with that army, provision, and alliance, I do not do the business, I am no judge, I understand nothing in the world.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Oh, Sir Positive! My Lady Vaine would speak with you at your lodging immediately.

Sir Posit. Cods my life-kjns! Stanford, I am heartily sorry I must leave you.

Stanf. So am not I.

Sir Posit. I beg pour pardon a thousand times. I vow to Gad I would not leave you but upon this occasion.

Emil. How glad am I of the occasion!

Sir Posit. [*going, returns in haste*]. Well, I hope you'll be so kind to believe that nothing but my duty to

Stanf. Oh, yes, we do believe it!

Sir Posit. But hark you, cousin, and Stanford, you must promise me not to take it ill; as I hope to breathe, I mean no incivility in the world.

Emil. Oh no, no, by no means.

Sir Posit. Your servant. [Exit SIR POSITIVE.

Car. Come, Lovel, let's follow him, and either prepare him, or find out some others for a fresh encounter.

Lov. Allons; but be sure, Roger, you forget not what I said to you. [Exeunt LOVEL and CAROLINA.

Rog. I will not, sir.

Stanf. How courteously he excused himself, for not tormenting us more!

Emil. This is the first good turn my Lady Vaine e'er did me.

Rog. No, madam, this was my ingenuity; I ne'er saw my Lady Vaine, nor do I know where she is.

[SIR POSITIVE returns.

Sir Posit. Cousin, and Mr. Stanford, I have considered on't, and I vow to Gad I am so afraid you'll take it ill, that rather than disoblige you, I'll put it off.

Stanf. Oh no, sir, by no means; 'twould be the rudest thing in the world, to disobey your mistress.

Sir Posit. Nay, 'faith, I see thou art angry now; prithee don't trouble thyself, I'll stay with thee.

Stanf. Hell and damnation! This is beyond all sufferance.

Emil. Let me advise you by all means to go to your mistress.

Sir Posit. Well! if you won't take it ill, I'll go; adieu.

[Exit SIR POSITIVE.

Enter WOODCOCK, SERGEANT, and MUSQUETEERS.

Wood. That's he, seize him.

Serg. Sir, by your leave, you must go to the captain of the guard.

Serg. I do not know, but I guess 'tis upon a quarrel betwixt you and one Lieutenant Huffle.

Stanf. Was ever anything so unfortunate as this? Can't you defer't an hour?

Serg. I am commanded by my officer, and dare not disobey.

Stanf. How loth am I to leave this woman! There is something extraordinary in this. Madam, I am willing enough to stay with you, but you see I am forced away. Stay you here, Roger.

[*Exit with SERGEANT and MUSQUETEERS.*

Emil. What an unlucky accident is this! but my misfortunes never fail me. [*Exit.*

Wood. So, he's safe, and I have done what I in honour ought to do; and now, honest Roger, my dear bully-rock, I'll stay with thee: prithee kiss me, thou art the honestest fellow in the world.

Rog. Sir, I am glad I can repay your commendations; I have the best news for ye, that ever you heard in your life.

Wood. Me! What is't, dear heart?

Rog. Why, I'll tell you; the Lady Emilia is in love with you.

Wood. In love with me! Fie, fie! Pox on't, what a wheedling rogue art thou now? Why should'st thou put this upon thy friend now?

Rog. Sir, this suspicion of yours is very injurious: let me tell you that I am sure I have not deserved it from you, sir.

Wood. Nay, I must confess I have always found thee an honest fellow, dear heart; but a pox on't, she can't love me. Pshaw, me? What, what can she see in me to love me for? No, no.

Rog. Sir, upon my life, it's true.

Wood. Ha, ha, dear rascal, kiss me; the truth on't is, I have thought some such thing a pretty while, but how the devil com'st thou to find it out? O

Rog. Oh sir! I am great with her maid Luce, and she told me her lady fell in love with you for singing: she says you have the sweetest voice, and the delicatest method in singing, of any man in England.

Wood. As Gad shall sa'me, she is a very ingenious woman; dear dog, honest rascal, here, here's for thy news. I'll go in, and give her a song immediately.

[*Exit.*

Rog. How greedily he swallows the bait! But these self-conceited idiots can never know when they are wheedled.

Enter LOVEL and NINNY.

Ninny. Pshaw, pshaw, ad'au'tre, ad'au'tre,¹ I can't abide you should put your tricks upon me.

Lov. Come, Ninny, leave fooling; you know I scorn it. I have always dealt faithfully with you.

Ninny [*aside*]. I must confess, he has always commended my poems, that's the truth on't; but I am afraid this is impossible.—Don't wheedle your friend.

Lov. I shall be angry, sir, if you distrust me longer. You may neglect this opportunity of raising yourself; do, but perhaps you may never have such another.

Ninny. Nay, but dear sir, speak, are you in earnest?

Lov. Do you intend to affront me? You had as good give me the lie.

Ninny. No; dear sir, I beg your pardon for that; I believe you; but how came you to know it?

Lov. Her sister Carolina told me so, and that she fell in love with you for reading a copy of your own verses: she says you read heroic verse with the best grace of any man in England.

Ninny. Before George, she's in the right of that; but, sir——

Lov. 'Slife, ask no more questions, but to her, and

strike while the iron's hot. Have you done your business, Roger?

Rog. Most dextrously, sir.

Lov. Let's away. [*Exeunt LOVEL and ROGER.*]

Ninny. Love me! I am o'erjoyed. I am sure I have loved her a great while.

Enter EMILIA, WOODCOCK following her, singing.

Wood. Fa, la, la, la, &c.

Emil. Heaven! this will distract me; what a vile noise he makes, worse than the creaking of a barn-door, or a coach-wheel ungreased!

Wood. This is damned unlucky, that he should be here to hinder my design. [*Aside.*]

Ninny. What a pox makes him here? But I'll on in my business. Madam, I'll speak you a copy of verses of my own, that have a great deal of mettle, and soul, and flame in 'em.

Emil. But I will not hear 'em, sir.

Wood. Alas, poor fool! he hopes to please her, but it won't do; ha, ha, ha! [*Aside.*]

Ninny. What the devil can she mean by this? sure she can't be in earnest. No, I have found it; ay, ay, it must be so: she would not have me speak before him, because she would not have him take notice of her passion; but what care I? [*Aside.*]

[*He offers to rehearse.*]

Wood. Prithee, Ninny, don't trouble the lady with your verses.

Ninny. Well, well! Can't you let it alone?

Wood. Fa, la, la, la, &c.

Emil. What horrid noise is this you make in my ears? Shall I never be free?

Ninny. Alas poor coxcomb! he hopes to please her with his voice. No, no, he may spare his pains—I am the man. [*Aside.*]

Wood. What a noise he makes!

humour, whate'er's the matter. I am sure Roger would not deceive me of all men. What an ass am I, that I should not find it. She's afraid my singing will encourage him to trouble her; or else she would not have him perceive her kindness. [*Aside.*

Emil. Sure all the world conspires against me this day!

Wood. Fa, la, la, la, &c.

[WOODCOCK sings all the while NINNY repeats.

Ninny [*reads*]:

My love to that prodigious height does rise,
 'Tis worthy of my heart, and of your eyes:
 First of my heart, which, being subdued by you,
 Must for that reason be both strong and true;
 Then of your eyes, which conquerors must subdue,
 And make 'em be both slaves and freemen too:
 Your eyes, which do both dazzle and delight,
 And are at once the joy and grief of sight.
 Love that is worthy of your face and fame,
 May be a glory, but can be no shame:
 My heart being overcome does stronger prove,
 Strength makes us yield unto your eyes and love.
 In this my heart is strong, because 'tis weak;
 'This, though I hold my peace, my love will speak.
 Silence can do more than e'er speech did do,
 For humble silence does do more than woo;
 Under the rose, which, being the sweetest flower,
 Shows silence in us has than speech more power.
 Why, what a damned noise he makes! Pox take me,
 madam, if one can be heard for him. Can't you let
 one alone with one's verses, trow?

Wood. Poor fellow! alas! he little thinks why I sing now. [*Aside.*

Ninny. If he thought how pleasant my rehearsing

Enter LUCE.

Luce. Oh, madam! your father's come to town, and has brought a country gentleman to come a wooing to you. He sent his man beforehand to know if you were within, and one of the servants unluckily informed him before I could see him. He says, he's the most downright plodding gentleman the country can afford.

Emil. What will become of me! is there no mercy in store for me?

Wood. Is he coming?—nay then—hem—hem!

Ninny. I'll make haste before he comes to hinder me.

[*They both take hold of EMILIA, and hold her by force, and sing and repeat as fast again as they did before.*]

Emil. For Heaven's sake let me go!

[*WOODCOCK and NINNY sing and repeat both together.*]

Emil. Oh, hold, hold! I faint, if you give not over.

Wood. What a devil does she mean by this? I am sure she loves me; but perhaps rather than endure the trouble of his noise, she's willing to dispense with the pleasure of my voice.

Ninny. A poise¹ take this Woodcock, that he should anger this lady: as I hope to live, he's an impertinent fellow, for though she was troubled at him, I perceived she was transported with me.

Emil. It must be so: I must do ill, that good may come on't. This country-fellow will be the worst plague of all, since he has my father's authority to back him. I must be forced to subdue my own nature, and flatter these coxcombs, to get rid of him, for they are so impudent they'll drive him from hence——

Enter STANFORD, and overhears.

Wood. Madam, let me ask you in private, How'did you like my song? speak boldly, madam; Ninny does not hear, dear heart.

Emil. I must needs like it, sir, or betray my own judgment.

Wood. Ah, dear Roger! thou art a made man for ever. [*Aside.*] I am the man.

Stanf. What's this I hear? [*To himself.*]

Ninny. How did you like my verses, madam?

Emil. So well, sir, that I hope you will let me hear 'em 'often. . What am I reduced to?

Stanf. Oh devil, what's this?

Ninny. How happy shall I be! The truth is, I did perceive you were troubled at Woodcock's senseless song; how we would enjoy ourselves if he were gone!

Stanf. Is it possible I should be deceived so much?

Wood. I'll tell thee, dear heart, if thou bee'st troubled at Ninny's rhymes, upon my honour I'll beat the rogue.

Enter FATHER and Country Gentleman.

Fath. This is she, sir.

Coun. Gent. Your servant, madam.

Stanf. 'Death she is a very gossip, and converses with all sort of fools; not only with patience, but with pleasure too. How civilly she entertains them! That I should be such an owl, to think there could be a woman not impertinent! I have not patience to look upon her longer. [*Exit.*]

Wood. It won't do, Ninny; her father little thinks she's engaged, dear heart.

Ninny. No, no; her father little thinks she's engaged,—nor you neither to whom [*aside*]. Ha, ha, ha! it makes me laugh to think how this country gentleman will be bobbed, Woodcock.

Wood. He may go down, Ninny, like an ass as he came; she'll send him down with a flea in's ear—take that from me.

Ninny. What a poise! he does not know she lover
me, does he? [*Exit.*]

Coun. Gent. Madam, I am but just now come to town, you see my boots are dirty still ; but I make bold, as the saying is.

Emil. More bold than welcome, I assure you, sir.

Coun. Gent. Thank you, good sweet madam ; this is the most obliging gentlewoman that ever was.

Fath. By this he shows the impatience of his love, daughter.

Wood. Madam, I am a son of a whore, if I have not the best song upon that subject, that ever you heard in your life.

Ninny. Before George, madam, I'll repeat you a copy of verses of my own, ten times better than his song.

Wood. You are an impudent coxcomb to say so, dear heart ; and ye lie, and I am satisfied.

Ninny. Do I so ? Madam, do but you judge.

Fath. What can this mean ? they are both mad.

[NINNY and WOODCOCK sing and repeat together.]

Ninny [repeats] :

I am so impatient for to go to my dear,
That I run headlong without wit or fear.

Woodcock [sings] :

My love is cruel grown,
For to leave me all alone,
Thus for to sing and moan.

Ah, woe is me !

Ninny. What an impertinent fellow are you !

Wood. Peace, coxcomb, peace ; cannot you let one alone ?

Ninny [repeats] :

So great the power of our love is now,
We can't persuade it reason for t' allow.
Strange miracle of Cytherea's force,
For to transform a man into a horse.

Woodcock [sings] :

But I'll strive to find

Oh, woe is me!

Hay ho, hay ho, my love,

Who so cruel as Jenny to me?

[*They offer to sing and repeat again.*]

Fath. Hold, hold! are you both mad? Is the devil in you? If he be, I shall have them will conjure him out of you; come out, you coxcombs, or I'll drive you out.

[*Exeunt FATHER, NINNY, and WOODCOCK.*]

Coun. Gent. These gentlemen are as mad as March hares, madam, as the saying is; but to our business: I had not the power, as I was a saying, to keep from you longer, lady; not so much as a pissing-while, d'ye see! for cat will to kind, as the saying is.

Luce. Oh, sir, you compliment, you are an absolute country courtier.

Coun. Gent. Who, I? alas, not I, in sober sadness; we that live in the country are right down, d'ye see; we call a spade a spade, as the saying is, for our part.

Luce. You do well, sir; for hypocrisy is an abominable vice.

Coun. Gent. 'Tis indeed, to be a Pharisee, and carry two faces in a hood, as the saying is.

Emil. Now I wish my t'other two fools would come back and drive away this.

Luce. I perceive you are very good at proverbs, sir; don't you use to play at that sport with the country-gentlewomen?

Coun. Gent. O yes, I am old dog at that; I am too hard for 'em all at it, d'ye see. [*To EMILIA.*] But, madam, now we talk of the country, how do you think you can like a country life?

Emil. O rarely! I can't choose; to fill one's belly with curds and cream, and stewed prunes, to eat honeycomb, and rashers of bacon at poor neighbours' houses,

to rise up at five o'clock in the morning to look to my

Coun. Gent. O rare! how we shall cotton together, as the saying is! I love a good housewife with all my heart; but, madam, I have a cast of hawks, and five couples of spaniels too. Oh, madam, if you saw my beloved bitch Venus, you would be in love with her; she's the best at a retrieve of any bitch in England, d'ye see.

Emil. Is he here? this is heaven to me, to see him after my late afflictions. [*Aside.*

Enter STANFORD and ROGER.

[*To the Coun. Gent.*]. Sir, I have some business will engage me half an hour, pray will you avoid my sight in the meantime.

Coun. Gent. I will, forsooth; I'll go see my horses fed the while.

Emil. This is a modester fool than the others I am troubled with; but, if my father had been here, I should not so easily have got rid of him—— What, are you come again? [*To STANFORD.*

Stanf. Ay, ay, too soon, I am sure.

Emil. Are you not very foppish, that you did not stay longer, then?

Stanf. This accusation becomes you well indeed.

Emil. Why not, sir?

Stanf. Alas, you are not impertinent; no, no, not you!

Emil. I am sure you are. What can this mean?

Stanf. You were never pleased with Woodcock's damned voice yet, nor Ninny's ridiculous poetry, not you?

Emil. Not more than yourself.

Stanf. No, no, you were not pleased with them, you did not praise 'em, nor entertain the other two fools with kindness; no, not you!

Emil. What a ridiculous thing 'twas of you, not to tell me this in one word—— O Heaven! are they here?

Enter SIR POSITIVE and LADY VAINÉ.

Sir Posit. You see, I am as good as my word, Stanford.

Lady Vaine. You see, madam, how ready I am to wait on your ladyship.

Emil. Ay, to my cost, I thank you.

Stanf. She thinks I am so easily bit, as to take this for a satisfaction, but I am too old to be deceived again.

[*Aside.*

Enter LOVEL and CAROLINA.

Lov. Now, madam, to our business; if we don't put 'em out of this humour, 'tis strange.

Car. However, let's use our lawful endeavours towards it.

Enter WOODCOCK and NINNY.

[*WOODCOCK and NINNY sing and repeat both together.*

Wood. 'Slife, I'll teach you to trouble this lady with your pitiful rhymes.

Ninny. You teach me? Nay, if you provoke me before company, you shall find me a lion——

[*They draw.*

Wood. Have at you, dear heart.

Sir Posit. Hold, Woodcock! why should you disparage poet Ninny? He's a man of admirable parts, and as cunning a fellow, between you and I—Stanford, I believe he's a Jesuit, but I am sure he is a Jansenist.

Wood. He a Jesuit, that understands neither Greek nor Latin?

Sir Posit. Now he talks of that, Stanford, I'll tell thee what a master I am of those languages. I have found out, in the progress of my study, I must confess with some diligence, four-and-twenty Greek and Latin words for black-puddings and sausages.

Wood. Think to huff me? I could show you a matter of two hundred wounds I got when I was a volunteer

Sir Posit. *Cambridge!* Well, that *Cambridge* is a good ship; and do you know, *Stanford*, that I understand a ship better than anything in the world?

Stanf. Do you speak, madam; you are pleased with this. [To EMILIA.]

Emil. Methinks you are as troublesome as he.

Sir Posit. You may talk of your *Petts* and your *Deans*,¹ I'll build a ship with any of them for £10,000

Emil. What will become of me? for if I should go, they would follow me.

Lov. This is extremely well painted.

[Shows a picture to CAROLINA.]

Sir Posit. Painted? Why, do you understand painting?

Lov. Not I, sir.

Sir Posit. I do; if you please, leave that to me. 'Tis true, *Michael Angelo*, *Titian*, *Raphael*, *Tintoret*, *Julio Romano*, and *Paulo Veronese* were very pretty hopeful men; but I would you saw a piece of mine—I showed you my *Magdalen*, *Emilia*, and I protest I drew that in half an hour.

Emil. Oh! What shall I do to get rid of all these tormentors?

Stanf. I cannot but like this woman yet, whate'er's the matter. And yet I am sure she is impertinent!

[Aside.]

Sir Posit. Let me see—H. H.—oh dear! *Hans Holbein*; here are strokes, here's mastery; well, no man in England shall deceive me in *Hans Holbein's* hand, take that from me.

Lady Vaine [to EMILIA]. O' my conscience, madam, this gentleman understands everything in the world.

Car. In good earnest, *Lovel*, that's very pleasant. *Hans Holbein!* why, 'tis a new sign for my landlord, finished but yesterday, that cost him a noble; the painting done by a fellow that paints posts and rails,

¹ Richard Deane, the painter of the ship, and the painter of the picture.

one Humphrey Hobson, and he calls him Hans Holbein!

Rog. Indeed, Mr. Woodcock, fifty miles in a day was well run.

Wood. I'faith was't, dear heart.

Sir Posit. Run? why, why will you pretend to running in my company? You run! why, I have run sixty miles in a day, by a lady's coach, that I fell in love withal in the streets, just as she was going out of town, Stanford; and yet I vow to thee, I was not breathed at all that time.

Lov. [to CAR.]. There's knight-errantry for you, madam. Let any of your romances match me that now.

Wood. [to LADY VAINÉ]. 'Tis true, madam, Sir Positive and poet Ninny are excellent men, and brave bully-rocks; but they must grant that neither of 'em understand mathematics but myself.

Sir Posit. Mathematics? Why, who's that talks of mathematics? Let 'em alone, let 'em alone. Now you shall see, Stanford.

Wood. Why, 'twas I, dear heart.

Sir Posit. I, dear heart, quotha? I don't think you understand the principles on't; o' my conscience you are scarce come so far yet as the squaring of the circle, or finding out the longitude. Mathematics! Why, this is the only thing I value myself upon in the world, Cousin Emilia.

Emil. Heaven deliver me!

Stanf. Curse on 'em all! Well, there must be something more in this woman than I imagine.

Ninny [to EMIL.]. No man in England plays better upon the cithern than I do; ask George, my barber, else. Madam, he's a great judge.

Sir Posit. Cithern, cithern! Who named a cithern there? Who was't? Who was't?

Sir Posit. You talk of a cithern before me? when I invented the instrument.

Lov. Woodcock, stand up to him in mathematics; to him!

Wood. Say you so? Well then, by the Lord Harry, Sir Positive, I do understand mathematics better than you; and I lie over against the Rose Tavern in Covent Garden, dear heart.

Sir Posit. I will justify with my sword that you understand nothing at all on't—draw!

Wood. Nay, hold, hold! I have done, bully-rock, if you be so angry; but it's a hard case you won't give a man leave to understand a little mathematics in your company, dear heart.

Sir Posit. Pox on't, I have told thee often enough of this, thou wilt still be putting thyself forward to things thou dost not understand.

Emil. This impudence is beyond all example, and there is no possibility of getting from them.

Car. I'll tell you one thing, cousin, you cannot understand.

Sir Posit. I'll be hanged then.

Car. You cannot cheat at dice.

Sir Posit. Ha, ha! why you don't know me sure, you never heard of me.

Lov. Metaphysics.

Sir Posit. Faith, well thought on, Lovel, prithee put me in mind of that presently; if I don't give you that account of metaphysics shall make you stare again, cut my throat. But as I hope to live, Stanford, 'tis a strange thing Carolina should be so near akin to me, and not know me! False dice! I have spent my time very well indeed, if any man outdoes me in that; for your goads,^r your high fullams and low fullams, your cater-deuce-ace, and your sise-cater-deuce, your cinque-trey-

ace, your barr-cater-trey, your barr-cinque-deuce, your barr-sise-ace, and all that, when I have studied 'em these sixteen years—Cousin Emilia, you know this, don't you?

Emil. Oh, horrid! What will become of me?

Stanf. Sure I was mistaken, for this must be a woman of sense; I love her extremely. I would I did not.

Sir Posit. But what was that, Lovel, I desired you to put me in mind of?

Lov. Legerdemain.

Sir Posit. Good, there 'tis now; I had thought I had kept that quality to myself of all things in the world. Sure the devil must help thee, Lovel; how could'st thou come to know that I understood legerdemain else? Why, I'll perform all tricks of legerdemain with any man in England, let him be what he will; for the cups and balls, Jack-in-a-Pulpit, S. Andrew's-Cross.

Car. Undoubtedly, Lovel, Cardinal Mazarin was a great statesman.

Sir Posit. Statesman, do you say? Cardinal Mazarin a statesman. Well, I will say nothing of myself for that; no, I am no statesman; but you may please to remember who was bobbed at Ostend, ha, ha! what say you, Stanford?

Emil. Oh, Heavens! Can you contrive no way of escaping?

Stanf. Let's e'en try what we can do; for we had better be with one another, than with these fools.

Sir Posit. Betwixt you and I, I was the man that managed all this business against him.

Lady Vaine. Good-lack-a-day, madam, this gentleman has a bottomless understanding.

Ninny. He's a very rare man, and has great power and imagination.

Wood. As any man in Europe, dear heart.

Sir Posit. This very thing has made me so famous all

of State in Russia ; but the truth on't is, Stanford, I expect that nearer home.

Rog. Jacob Hall's a most admirable rope-dancer, Mr. Woodcock.

Sir Posit. Honest Roger ! How the devil could'st thou find me out in that ? Jacob Hall has told thee, has he not ? I thought he would have kept that to himself ; but I taught him, nay, I taught the Turk himself.

Lov. Hey, from a statesman to a rope-dancer ! What a leap was there ?

Car. My maid is excellent at pastry.

Sir Posit. Ha ! why there 'tis ; now, upon my honour, I understand this ten times better than anything I have spoke of yet ! Pastry ! why, the devil take me, if I would not be content never to eat pie, but of my own making, as long as I live. I'll tell you, when I was but four years old I had so rich a fancy, and made such extraordinary dirt pies, that the most eminent cooks in all London would come and observe me, to steal from me.

Lady Vaine. I beseech you, Madam Emilia, take notice of Sir Positive ; he is a prodigy of understanding.

Sir Posit. Ah, madam, 'tis your pleasure to say so ; but 'twas this made me skilful in the art of building, which is the only art I am proud of in the world. I'll tell you, Stanford, I have seventeen models of the city of London of my own making, and the worst of 'em makes London an other-guess London than 'tis like to be ; but no man in England has those models of houses that I have.

Stanf. This affliction is beyond all example ; why the devil dost thou provoke him to this ?

Lov. Were it not a ridiculous thing of me not to please myself ?

Stanf. That's true ; but what will become of us in the

Emil. Heaven knows! this door's locked, and there's no escaping at the other.

Sir Posit. I'll tell you, madam, the other day a damned old rat eat me up a dining-room and withdrawing-chamber, worth fifty pound.

Car. A rat eat up a dining-room and withdrawing-room! How could that be?

Emil. Oh, fie, sister, it's no matter how. Why will you ask him?

Sir Posit. Why, I make all my models of houses in paste; I vow to Gad I am ashamed to tell you how much it costs me a year in milk, meal, eggs and butter.

Lady Vaine. Dear, Sir Positive, I think you understand more than ever Solomon did.

Sir Posit. No, no, madam, alas not I, I understand little; but I'll tell you, madam, what was said of me the other day by some great persons, that shall be nameless.

Lady Vaine. What was that, sir.

Sir Posit. That I was a man of the most universal knowledge of any man in England; but, without comparison, the best poet in Europe.

Car. Now, Lovel, to your post.

Lov. Navigation.

Sir Posit. Navigation d'ye talk of?

Car. Geography.

Sir Posit. Geography, d'ye talk of?

Lov. Physic.

Car. Divinity.

Lov. Surgery.

Car. Arithmetic.

Lov. Astronomy.

Sir Posit. Astronomy d'ye talk of?

Car. Palmistry.

Lov. Logic.

[LOVEL and CAROLINA speak so fast one after another, that SIR POSITIVE turns himself first to one, then to another, and has not time to speak to them.]

Sir Posit. Hold, hold, hold, hold! Navigation, geography, astronomy, palmistry, physic, divinity, surgery, arithmetic, logic, cookery, and magic: I'll speak to every one of these in their order. If I don't understand 'em every one in perfection, nay, if I don't fence, dance, ride, sing, fight a duel, speak French, command an army, play on the violin, bagpipe, organ, harp, hautboy, sack-but, and double curtal, speak Spanish, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, Dutch, Welsh and Irish, dance a jig, throw the bar, swear, drink, swagger, whore, quarrel, cuff, break windows, manage affairs of state, hunt, hawk, shoot, angle, play at cat, stool-ball, scotch hop and trap-ball, preach, dispute, make speeches—[*Coughs.*] Prithee get me a glass of small beer, Roger.

Stanf. Hell and furies!

Emil. Oh, oh!

[*They run.*]

Sir Posit. Nay, hold, I have not told you half; if I don't do all these, and fifty times more, I am the greatest owl, pimp, monkey, jackanapes, baboon, rascal, oaf, ignoramus, loggerhead, cur-dog, blockhead, buffoon, jack-pudding, tony, or what you will. Spit upon me, kick me, cuff me, lug me by the ears, pull me by the nose, tread upon me, and despise me more, than the world now values me.

[*Exeunt omnes, and he goes out talking as fast as he can.*]





ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of EMILIA and CAROLINA.*

Enter EMILIA, STANFORD, and LOVEL.



STANF. If you be my friend, as you profess to be, you will not deny me this.

Lov. I am your friend, and would not have you perplex yourself with what you see there's no end of. Can this frowardness relieve you?

Stanf. Good sir, none of your grave advice. I am resolved to relieve myself by abandoning all conversation.

Lov. How can you brook Emilia's company?

Stanf. Pish! She's not altogether so troublesome. Ask me no more questions.

Lov. Ha! does he like her? Thus far my design thrives. Well! I'll keep 'em from you a while; but the hounds are so eager, they'll never endure pole-hunting^r long. [*Exit.*

Stanf. You hear, madam, we are not like to be long free from these inhuman persecutors.

Emil. Why will you call them so? You know I am pleased with 'em. They are my recreation, as you were pleased to say.

Stanf. No, no ; you have convinced me of the contrary. But how can you blame me for so easy a mistake ?

Emil. You are a very fit man to despise impertinent people, you are !

Stanf. 'Twill be very wisely done to stand muttering here till the fools in the next room break in upon you.

Emil. Perhaps as wisely done as to trust myself with you, as you have behaved yourself.

Stanf. If you have no more sense than to stay longer, I shall be assured of what I was but jealous of before.

Emil. What would your wisdom have me do now ?

Stanf. The worst of them would not have asked such a question. Who but you would be in doubt, or would not fly as a thief does from a hue and cry ?

Emil. There's no hope of escaping.

Stanf. Now will you, in despair of avoiding them, stay here and keep them company ?

Emil. 'Twere vain presumption to hope for liberty by miracle. They will no more lose us than an attorney will a young squire that's newly waded into law. He will be sure never to leave him till he has brought him out of his depth.

Stanf. By this rule you should not resist a man that comes to ravish you, because he's like to be too strong for you ; but if you did not use the means your honesty would be no more admired in that than your wisdom in this.

Emil. [*aside*]. This is a most admirable person. Where should I go ?

[*To him.*]

Stanf. I would run into a fire to be quit of 'em.

Emil. Well, I am content to go along with you ; not for your sake, but my own.

Stanf. Perhaps my inclinations are not much unlike yours.

Enter LOVEL, CAROLINA, SIR POSITIVE, NINNY, WOODCOCK, *and* LADY VAINÉ.

Lov. Oh, Stanf. I

Stanf. Now, whose fault was this? A curse upon your delaying. Now 'tis too late to fly.

Sir Posit. Dost talk of flying, Jack? I'll teach thee to do that with the greatest ease in the world. 'Tis true I heard of a coxcomb that broke his neck with the experiment; but if I had been by him I would have taught him to have flown with the best gosshawk in the world.

Stanf. Oh, impudence!

Sir Posit. And for my own part, for one flight or so, for I will not strain myself for any man's pleasure; I do it but for my recreation. I am no mercenary. I will fly at a heron with the best jer-falcon that ever flew; that's fair.

Lady Vaine. Oh, very fair as can be. By all means, sir, learn of him; he'll do it.

Sir Posit. Do it, madam? I think so. I tell you, all elements are alike to me. I could live in any one of 'em as well as the earth. 'Tis nothing but a sordid earthly nature in us makes us love the earth better than any other element.

Enter ROGER.

Emil. I see it is in vain to torment ourselves without endeavouring our liberty.

Stanf. That's cunningly found out.

Rog. Sir, if you can find a way to be rid of Sir Positive and my Lady Vaine, I'll tell you how to quit yourselves of the other.

Emil. We may set 'em one upon another, and by that we may either get rid, or at least be a little revenged of 'em.

Stanf. That may make some amends for your last neglect.

Car. Now they are settled in their business, I leave them and go to my tire-woman in Covent Garden, who shall call for new patterns of lace for me. Will

Lov. I hope you have no design upon me. Are your intentions honourable?

[*EMILIA whispers to WOODCOCK.*]

Car. Yes, indeed are they, I intend no rape upon you.

Lov. Nor any other unlawful way of love.

Car. Leave fooling, and let's away.

[*Exeunt LOVEL and CAROLINA.*]

Sir Posit. [*to LADY VAINÉ*]. Pshaw! I could live in the water so well that of my conscience I am amphibious. I could catch fish as well as any cormorant or otter. Nay, I can live so long under water that—but that I have greater designs on foot here—I would go into the West Indies to dive for sponges and corals, and if in one year I were not the richest man that ever went thither, I would be hanged, Jack Stanford, when I swam over again.

Stanf. 'Sdeath, I would you were under water one half-hour in the meantime.

Sir Posit. Faith, I would I were, Jack. Thou would'st admire to see what pleasure I take in lying under water an hour or two, especially if the water be warm!

Stanf. Yes, yes; and you can eat fire, too, can't ye?

Sir Posit. Pshaw! You admire a man that eats fire among you, one that has a depraved palate, and is not able to taste an ash from an oak-coal, which I can distinguish as well as I can a pickled herring from a mussel.

Ninny. Eat fire? It is impossible.

Sir Posit. You are a fop. I pity your ignorance. Eat fire! Why, I'll eat fire and brimstone with the devil himself, man. What dost talk of that?

Wood. [*to EMILIA*]. I warrant you, dear heart, I'll do it. And yet I am plaguily afraid of Sir Positive.

Emil. What am I forced to? Master Ninny, you have often professed some kindness to me.

Ninny. And, madam, may I never make couplet

again, if I don't love you better than I do music or poetry.

Emil. And understand me as little [*aside*]. I shall soon make trial of you. [*To him.*]

Ninny. And before George if I do not serve you!

Emil. Then be sure the next thing Sir Positive pretends to, contradict him in, and be as positive as he is; and by this perhaps you may deserve my kindness.

Ninny. But suppose, madam, he should draw upon me, and do me a mischief.

Emil. Master Stanford and his man will bail you from that.

Ninny. In confidence of this, I shall be glad to serve you.

Lady Vaine. I wonder, dear sir, a man of your incomparable abilities should want preferment.

Sir Posit. Modesty! modesty! We that are modest men, get nothing in this age.

Lady Vaine. Perhaps the world does not know of these things.

Sir Posit. Not know! Why, I was never in company with any man in my life, but I told him all.

Wood. And no man ever believed you, dear heart.

Sir Posit. As I hope to breathe, Jack, this fellow's mad.

Wood. Ne'er tell me, dear heart; I know you understand nothing of all you have pretended to, in comparison of me, dear heart.

Sir Posit. Is not this very pleasant, madam? ha, ha!

Ninny. Nay, nay, never laugh for the matter, and think to bear up against all the world. Do you think I don't think myself a better poet than you?

Wood. And I a better musician?

Sir Posit. You impudent baboons!

Enter BRIDGET.

Bridg. Madam, the party has stayed for you a good while at the "Setting-Dog and Partridge."

Lady Vaine. Come, while they dispute, let's go.

[*Exeunt* LADY VAINE and BRIDGET; EMILIA offers to go out.

Ninny. Nay, madam, if you don't stay to prevent mischief, I have done: for I find I begin to grow furious and dare not trust my own temper.

Sir Posit. Have you the impudence to say you are a better poet and you a better musician than I am?

Ninny. Ay, ay; and not only so, but a better divine, astrologer, mathematician, geographer, seaman——

Wood. A better physician, lawyer, statesman, almanac-maker.

Ninny. Ay, and what shall break your heart, a better trap-ball-player too, take notice of that——

Wood. In one word, I understand everything that is or is not to be understood, better than you do. Take that from me.

Ninny. And let me tell you, Sir Positive, 'tis a very confident thing in you to pretend to understand anything as well as I do.

Sir Posit. Oh, impudence!

Wood. You understand! How should you come by understanding? Where had you your knowledge, dear heart? Pshaw!

Sir Posit. What will this age come to?

Ninny. Your insolence makes me blush, as I hope to breathe, for such an empty fellow to talk of wit or sense—phsaw! prithee hold thy tongue.

Sir Posit. I am amazed!

Wood. I tell thee, dear soul, I love thee so well, I would not have thee pretend to these things thou dost not understand.

Sir Posit. I can hold no longer. Ye eternal dogs, ye curs, ye ignorant whelps, I'll sacrifice ye: let me go; if there be no more sons of whores in England, I'll murder 'em.

Stanf. Bear up to him, I'll prevent all injuries.

Ninny. Nay then, sir, never fret and fume for the matter. Look you, sir, pray what can you do better than I?

Wood. Or I either? Let's hear, dear heart.

Sir Posit. Hear it, you rascals? I'll rout an army with my single valour; I'll burn a whole fleet at three leagues' distance; I'll make ships go all over the world without sails! I'll plough up rocks steep as the Alps in dust, and lave the Tyrrhene waters into clouds (as my friend Cataline says).

Ninny. Pshaw! you! I'll pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon (as my friend Hotspur says). What do you talk of that?

Emil. Certainly, he's distracted! This is some revenge.

Sir Posit. This single head of mine shall be the balance of Christendom; and by the strength of this I'll undermine all commonwealths, destroy all monarchies, and write heroic Plays. Ye dogs, let me see either of you do that.

Stanf. This is raving madness!

Ninny. 'Would I were well rid of him; I tremble every joint of me!

Sir Posit. With this right hand I'll pluck up kingdoms by the roots, depopulate whole nations, burn cities, murder matrons, and ravish sucking infants. You curs, can you do this?

Rog. But, sir, in the midst of your fury, my Lady Vaine is gone away with a Gentleman.

Sir Posit. Ah dear Roger, which way did she go? Show me quickly, I'll bring her back, and she shall see

Wood. I'm glad you are gone, sir; my heart was at my mouth. Did I not do the business rarely, my pretty rogue? How canst thou reward me for this? ha?

Emil. Unfortunate woman! What am I reduced to? If you will go immediately to Oxford-Kate's, and stay for me in the great room there, I will not fail to come to you in a little time, and let you know how sensible I am of this favour. Go, go instantly, and make no words on't.

Wood. I fly, madam. O dear Roger! I have catched her. Oh, rogue! I'll provide a parson immediately. Dear son of a whore, let me kiss thee. [Exit.

Stanf. I shall have a better opinion of her wit, than ever I had, if she gets rid of this brace of Jack Puddings.

Ninny. Ay, madam, you see what danger I have undergone. I am only unhappy I have lost no blood in the service; for as a noble author says—

“It would have been to me both loss and gain.”

But shall I hope for any favour from you?

Emil. Let not Stanford perceive anything; go and stay for me at Oxford-Kate's, in the great room, and there we may freely speak our minds.

Ninny. And will you not fail to come?

Emil. No, no; but, whatever happens, remove not till I come to you. Away, away, we are observed.

Ninny. Oh, admirable fortune! Sure I was born with a caul on my head, and wrapped in my mother's smock; the ladies do so love me! [Exit.

Emil. I would these two fools were obliged to stay there, till I came to 'em!

Stanf. Now, I hope you will take warning, and stay here no longer, where they may find you out; unless you take pleasure in 'em.

Emil. Where can I find a place of safe retreat?

Rog. I have a sister lives in Covent Garden, a tire-woman, where at this time of night you may be private.

Enter SIR POSITIVE.

Emil. Make haste there. O Heaven, is he returned?

Sir Posit. Pox on't, I can't find my mistress; where are these rogues?

Stanf. My Lady Vaine is returned, and Ninny and Woodcock are with her in the next room.

Sir Posit. Say you so? I'll in, and first make the puppies recant their errors, and then murder 'em in presence of my mistress. *[Exit.*

Stanf. So! you are fast. *[Locks the door.*

Emil. Come away, away!

[Exeunt STANFORD, EMILIA, and ROGER.



SCENE II.

Sir Posit. *[within].* Stanford, open the door; are you mad? hey, Stanford! Cousin Emilia! open the door!

Enter LADY VAINÉ and BRIDGET.

Lady Vaine. What, is the house empty?—'twas an unlucky thing that the gentlemen should go before we came.

Bridg. You may thank Sir Positive; would he were far enough for me, for keeping your ladyship so long.

Sir Posit. Stanford! Emilia! open the door there! Help, help, help!

Lady Vaine. That's his voice! what can be the matter? The key is in the door. I'll in and see.

[She unlocks the door.

Enter SIR POSITIVE.

Sir Posit. Oh madam! your humble servant. If I

Lady Vaine. Did he lock you in?

Sir Posit. Yes, madam; for which with this blade, which is inured to slaughter, will I slice him into atoms.

Lady Vaine. No, sweet Sir Positive, restrain your passion; such a fellow as he deserves to be tossed in a blanket.

Sir Posit. No, no, never talk of that, madam! Such a revenge is below me; but I have a pen that will bite, and I'll do it vigorously. And yet the rogue has done me a kindness: for if he had not locked me up, I had missed of your ladyship.

Lady Vaine. Sir, upon my honour, I intended not to have stayed from you.

Sir Posit. But, madam, the loss of you has put me into that fright, that I desire to make sure of you.

Lady Vaine. As how, good sir?

Sir Posit. To marry you this night.

Lady Vaine. That's short warning.

Sir Posit. But, madam, I have had your promise these three days, and that's long enough to expect performance.

Bridg. Madam, e'en take him at his word.

Lady Vaine. But how shall I answer that to my friend in the country?

Bridg. Ne'er trouble yourself for that, madam; 'tis fashionable to have a servant as well as a husband. And besides the pleasure of a gallant, there will be another, which is no small one to some women, of deceiving your husband.

Lady Vaine. Thou art in the right, wench. Besides, the failing of this assignation has set me so agog, I would very unwillingly lie alone to-night.

Sir Posit. Come, madam, I see you are consulting: I'll send for a parson shall soon finish the debate.

Sir Posit. O intolerable happiness! Let's dispatch it immediately in this house.

Lady Vaine. No, sir! I'll carry you to a more private place.

Sir Posit. Come, madam, I'll wait on you. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter LOVEL and CAROLINA.

Car. Now I have dispatched this important business of womankind, which is making themselves fine, we may return——

Lov. To the place from whence we came, and from thence to the place of execution, if you please. I'll have a Levite ready.

Car. No, sir, I know you are too true a son of the Church to venture that after the canonical hour.

Lov. I am not so formal to observe a method in anything; besides, marriage, being at best unseasonable, can never be less than now.

Car. To speak gravely, let us first take the advice of our pillows, since sleep, being a great settler of the brain, may be an enemy to marriage; for one would think that few in their right wits would undertake so unseasonable an action, as you call it.

Lov. Must people then be tamed into marriage, as they man^r hawks with watching?

Enter STANFORD, EMILIA, and ROGER.

Car. What's here? my sister with Stanford?

Emil. How unlucky is this! my sister, and an idle fellow with her?

Stanf. Ne'er trouble yourself; if your sister be not a fop, he's none, I'll assure you.

Emil. You are a very competent judge indeed!

Car. How now, sister? Can you with all your gravity steal away by night with a gentleman?

Emil. I'll be leaving the hawk when young and wild,

Lov. Come, Stanford, there's love betwixt you; for nothing else can make men and women so shame-faced as to seek out private places.

Car. Come, sister, if it be so, ne'er mince the matter; 'tis the way of all flesh.

Lov. And we are so far onward on that way, that, if you don't make haste, you will scarce overtake us.

Car. Come, confess, Emilia, what brought you hither?

Emil. I came to fly from impertinence, and I have found it here.

Car. That will not bring you off, sister; for, if you did not like this gentleman very well, you would fly from him as soon as any man.

Stanf. For my part, I only came to defend her from assaults at this time o' night.

Lov. If you had not an extraordinary value for her, you would not play the knight-errant, to my knowledge. Is not this dissimulation of yours very ridiculous?

Stanf. I must needs confess I never saw any woman I disliked less.

Car. And what say you, sister, of this gentleman?

Emil. To give the devil his due, I have met with less affliction from him than from other men.

Car. Nay, then in good earnest it must be a match.

Emil. That's wisely proposed of you to me, that am immediately leaving the world.

Stanf. Pox on her! how she pleases me. [*Aside.*] Why, who intends to stay behind. , [*To EMILIA.*]

Car. If you neglect this opportunity, sister, you'll ne'er be so well matched again.

Stanf. 'Twill not be so pleasant to go alone as you imagine.

Car. No, no, take hands, and march along, I say.

Emil. That would be too much to the advantage of my honour.

Lov. I'll send for my horse, and I'll follow you.

Emil. The remedy is almost as bad as the disease.

Stanf. Perhaps, if you consider it, 'twill be your wisest course.

Emil. No doubt I should have an admirable companion of you, as you think.

Car. I find you have so great a passion for the country-gentleman my father has provided for you, you will never be persuaded to be false to him.

Emil. He will be the greatest plague of all. What shall I do to be rid of him?

Car. There is but one way, sister. Even dispose of yourself to that honest gentleman, to have and to hold.

Stanf. 'Twill be very discreetly done not to quit yourself of this country fellow, and the rest of your fools now it is in your power.

Lov. Faith, madam, be persuaded and join hands.

Stanf. The truth is, I think we cannot do better than to leave the world together; 'twill be very uncomfortable wandering in deserts for you alone.

Emil. If I should be so mad as to join hands with you 'twould not be so much an argument of kindness to you as love to myself, since at best I am forced to choose the least of two great evils, either to be quite alone or to have ill company.

Lov. This will end in marriage, I see.

Emil. Oh, no! I dare not think of that! If he should grow troublesome then 'twould be out of my power to cast him off.

Stanf. Why, there's no necessity we should be such puppies as the rest of men and wives are, if we fall out, to live together and quarrel on.

Emil. The conditions of wedlock are the same to all.

Stanf. Whatsoever the public conditions are, our private ones shall be, if either grows a fop, the other shall have liberty to part.

Emil. I must confess that's reasonable

Rog. I will, sir.

Low. 'Faith, madam, you have taken great pains. Was't for yourself or me you did it?

Car. You have a very civil opinion of yourself, I see.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. O sir! yonder's Sir Positive and my Lady Vaine just alighted at the door with the man you sent for.

Emil. O undone! ruined for ever!

Stanf. 'Slife, you rascal! did not you tell me I might be private here?

Rog. Pray, sir, do not fret, but make your escape out at the back door.

Stanf. Away, away! quickly, for Heaven's sake!

Low. Come, madam, let's follow 'em.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



SCENE III.—*A Room in an Inn.*

Enter NINNY and WOODCOCK.

Ninny. Will you never leave one's room a little? I tell you I am busy.

Wood. And so am I; and 'tis my room, dear heart, let me tell you that.

Ninny. Before George, Woodcock, 'tis very impertinent to trouble one thus.

Wood. So 'tis, Ninny; I wonder you'll do it. For my part, a man that had the least soul of poetry in him would scorn to do this.

Ninny. What! do you say I have not a soul of poetry in me? I don't love to commend myself, Woodcock; but, now I am forced to it, I must tell you I have six

Ninny. Why, you lie then to tell me that I lie ; so you do.

Wood. You are a son of a whore, dear heart, to tell me I lie.

Ninny. You are a son of a whore as well as myself to tell me so, and you go to that.

Wood. Ay, ay, you may say your pleasure, but have a care, bully-rock, for if you give me the least affront I'll break your pate, take that from me.

Ninny. I'll take it from no man. If you do I'll break yours again, man, for all you are so brief. 'Slife, one shan't speak to you one of these days, you are grown so purdy.

Wood. Well, well, dear heart !

Ninny. Well, well, too ! an' you go to that, if you be so fierce. But I'd fain know what occasion there is for you and I to quarrel now ?

Wood. Ay, what indeed, dear heart ? Therefore, prithee, dear soul, kiss me. Dear rogue, if thou lov'st me go out of my room.

Ninny. No, good, sweet Woodcock now, go thee ; I'll do as much for thee another time, as I hope to live.

Wood. Dear cur, I love thee ; but prithee excuse me, I have a mistress to meet in this very room ; therefore, dear pretty Ninny, leave me.

Ninny. Cods my life-kins, to see the luck on't ! May I never versify again if I am not here upon the same occasion. I'll give thee five guineas if thou'lt leave me. I shall spare 'em well enough when I have got her. [*Aside.*

Wood. I'd have you know, Ninny, I scorn your guineas. Alas, poor fool, he little thinks I shall be in a better condition to spare fifty than he can five. Why then, in short, let me tell you, I am to be married within this half-hour, in this very room, dear heart.

Ninny. This is prodigious ! May I never have Play

Wood. So is mine, bully-rock!

Ninny. Dear Woodcock, let's reconcile this business here. I have two dice; he that throws most stays. Then am I sure to be too hard for him that way, for I can nap a six a yard. [*Aside.*

Wood. No, not I. By the Lord Harry, I'll not trust a business of that concernment to fortune.

Ninny. Nay, then, sir, I will keep my room; I was first in it.

Wood. By that rule you should go first out.

Ninny. 'Tis not you can turn me out.

Wood. Say you so? I'll try that.

[*Draw, and fight at distance.*

Ninny. At your own peril.

Wood. Can't you stand a little? Why do you go back so, dear heart?

Ninny. Let me alone; I know what I am doing in going back. I have the law on my side, and if I kill you it will be found *se defendendo*.

Wood. Ay, ay, have you murd'rous intentions, dear heart? If you do kill me I will declare upon my death-bed that you had malice in your heart, dear heart.

Ninny. Who, I? As I hope to be saved I scorn your words. I, malice? Do your worst. I am better known than so; I am not so outrageous. Pray hear me a word: you know we authors and ingenious men have a great many enemies.

Wood. We have so.

Ninny. At this rate we may kill one another; and a pox on them! they'd be glad on it; and, for my part, I would not die to please any of 'em.

Wood. Nor I neither; therefore prithee leave me my room, to prevent danger.

Ninny. I am not so base, but, if you will, let us lay down these dangerous engines of blood, and contend a

Come, come, you shall see I dare do anything, since you are resolved to try me.

[Enter two Servants, and part them and exeunt.]

Enter STANFORD, LOVELL, CAROLINA, EMILIA, and
ROGER.

Stanf. Here we are in as much danger as ever. Could anything be so foppish as returning to the place from whence we fled?

Emil. 'Tis a sweet time of night to go out upon the ramble.

Car. We are safe enough from anybody but my father, and we cannot be troubled with him long; 'tis his hour of going to bed.

Emil. How shall we dispose of the country fellow, if he should return?

Rog. Let me alone; I'll find a trick for him. I lived in the same town with him, and know him to be a downright credulous man, that will swallow anything.

Enter Father and Countryman.

Stanf. Now see! what have you brought yourself to?

Fath. Come, daughter, what think you of my choice of a husband? He's extreme rich, and is he not a very accomplished gentleman, ha?

Emil. There's a fellow, indeed! Why, he has not soul enough for a cock-chicken.

Fath. You are a foolish, froward girl, thus to despise your happiness; I'll tell you, either resolve to marry him to-morrow morning—

Lov. Hark you, sir! if you will take my advice, be not so hasty. You know young ladies are always coy, and, out of their little knowledge of the world, are apt to refuse that which may prove their greatest happiness.

Fath. What would you have me do with one that is so

Car. If you please, take some milder way; let us withdraw, and we'll all help to persuade her. You know it is not proper to be done before him.

Fath. I'll be ruled in this; but if persuasion will not do, force shall.

Car. [to EMILIA]. Be sure you seem pliant to his commands; it may advance our design.

Fath. Sir, we'll wait on you again presently.

[*Exeunt all but Country Gent. and ROGER.*]

Coun. Gent. Your servant, sir. Honest Roger, in sober sadness I am glad to see you well; I had almost forgot you.

Rog. And how does your sweet sister, Madam Dorothy?

Coun. Gent. Oh, brave and lusty; as sound as a roach, as they say.

Rog. I heard your worship was knighted.

Coun. Gent. No, not I, Roger; I am not ambitious of that. As the excellent proverb says, "Honour will buy no beef."

Rog. Now we are alone, sir, I am obliged to tell you. I am sorry to see one, whom I so much honoured, so ill used.

Coun. Gent. Pish! it's no matter, man; I care not for knighthood one pin of my sleeve, as the saying is.

Rog. Sir, I mean something concerns your worship nearer.

Coun. Gent. Nearer! What can that be?

Rog. I must beg your pardon for that; I may be ruined for my endeavours to serve you.

Coun. Gent. What! would any of your town gallants bob me of my mistress?

Rog. That were too good news for you to be true.

Coun. Gent. Thank you for nothing. Is this the honour you have for me, to wish me the loss of a mistress worth £10,000, do you see? Udds nigs!

Rog. Ten thousand pounds! Ha, ha, ha! Would she had it, for her own sake, and yours too!

Coun. Gent. Faith! are you there with your bears? Nay, then, I have brought my hog to a fair market.

Rog. If she had had one of those thousands my master would have married her long ere this. Sir, I have always honoured you, and could not in conscience but tell you this; and now it is in your power to ruin me.

Coun. Gent. Nay, I'll be as silent as a dormouse: but is it possible?

Rog. Nay, do not believe me if you please; but I have discharged my duty, and, if you marry her, the inconvenience will be yours, not mine. Besides, if she had that fortune you speak of (which she has, as much as I have), what good would it do you in the end? She'll never be persuaded to live in the country; you must keep her in town, with her coach and six horses, pages, and lackeys; and she must visit the Plays, the Park, and the Mulberry Garden.

Coun. Gent. O lamentable! this were the way to get a pair of horns bigger than the stag's head in my hall has. But, if I were married to her, I'd get her into the country as sure as a gun.

Rog. If you should, you'd have every week this earl, that lord, this knight, and that gentleman of her kindred come to take the fresh air; and to hunt and hawk with you in the time of year.

Coun. Gent. Why, they would eat me out of house and home, as the saying is.

Rog. They would despise your beef and mutton. You must keep a couple of French cooks, and eat nothing but pottages, fricassees, and ragouts; your champignons, coxcombs, and pallats; your andoilles, your Langue de porceau; your bisks and your olios.

Coun. Gent. What are all these? Several sorts of

and every dish will cost you a piece ; and will this be done with a small portion of a thousand pounds ?

Coun. Gent. I should soon bring a noble to ninepence then, as they say.

Rog. Then you must have your quails, ruffs, gnats, godwits, plover, doterels, wheat-ear, cock of the wood, and a hundred sorts of fowls. Besides, they would scorn your ale and cider, and March beer ; you must have your cellar full of champagne, chablis, burgundy, and remedy wines. But mum, sir, if you love me.

Enter FATHER, STANFORD, EMILIA, CAROLINA, *and* LOVEL.

Fath. Come, sir, I have brought my daughter to be obedient to my commands, and I would have you prepare to be married to-morrow morning.

Coun. Gent. I shall fail you, d'ye see.

Fath. What is it you say ?

Coun. Gent. I shan't be so civil, as the saying is.

Fath. This is madness.

Coun. Gent. No, sir, no ; there's no catching old birds with chaff. Fare you well.

Fath. Do you hear, sir ?

Coun. Gent. No, sir ; fare ye well—I am no bubble, as they say. [*Exit.*

Fath. I am amazed ! I'll after him, and inquire into the business ; I must not lose this son-in-law. [*Exit.*

Lov. The rogue has done dexterously.

Enter ROGER.

Rog. Come, sir, here's a parson in the next room ; despatch, while the old gentleman is out of the house.

[*They are going out.*

Enter WOODCOCK.

Stanf. 'Slife, Woodcock is here ! I'll cut his throat.

Emil. Pray none of your hectoring here, to alarm the house.

Wood. How now, dear heart! Why did not you come to me, as you promised?

Emil. For Heaven's sake, go up into the room two pair of stairs, and I'll steal from hence, and give you an account. Make haste.

Lov. Come, let us in, before we be interrupted again.
[*Exit WOODCOCK.*

Enter NINNY.

Ninny. Hist, madam; before George, 'twas unkindly done not to remember your assignation just now.

Emil. You'll spoil all: I could not get loose. Run into the garden, there's a back door: I'll come to you immediately. Make haste, we are observed.

Ninny. O ho! this is something.

Stanf. This woman has a soul! [*Exeunt omnes.*

Enter HUFFE, drunk.

Huffe. I have pursued him into this house that has abused me so basely behind my back; and by this whiniard, and by the spirit of gunpowder, I'll sacrifice him to my fury. Come out, you son of a whore!

Enter STANFORD, and the rest after him. STANFORD presses upon HUFFE, and he falls.

Stanf. That this puppy should provoke me to draw upon him, that is so drunk he cannot stand!

Huffe. That's a mistake; not so drunk yet but, if I had stood soberly to't, I should have been run through the lungs before this. [To himself.

Enter SIR POSITIVE and LADY VAINE.

Emil. Is there no end of our affliction!

Sir Posit. Dear cousin and Jack Stanford, give me joy; I am married to a lady, that is the greatest pattern of virtue that this age

it, I say. She's a beauty—take that from me. What say you, Stanford? *[Flourish within.]*

Stanf. Yes, yes, she's cursedly handsome.

Lady Vaine. If my glass does not flatter me, you are not deceived in your judgment, dear sir.

Sir Posit. Here I have brought fiddles to rejoice with you, Jack, and cousin; since I know you love mirth as well as I do.

Enter WOODCOCK.

Wood. I had waited for thee, my dear miss, if this unexpected music had not brought me hither.

Enter NINNY.

Ninny. How now? what fiddles are these?

Sir Posit. You dogs, are you here? Now, madam, you shall see how I'll chastise these fellows that would be wits.

Wood. Hold, dear rogue! why should'st thou be angry? Upon my honour, I did but droll with thee; for, by the Lord Harry, I take thee to be one of the pillars of the nation, dear heart!

Sir Posit. O, do you so?

Ninny. Dear Sir Positive, I beg your pardon a thousand times; for my part, I believe there never was a man of that prodigious understanding that you have.

Sir Posit. Do you so? I knew it was impossible they should be in earnest. But, do you hear? Have a care of being positive another time; a man would think you might learn more modesty of me.

Wood. Come, dear heart, art thou here? Prithee kiss me, and let's be friends for all our late cussing. What need we care for a douse or two of the chops, bully-rock?

Ninny. Nay, for my part, I value it as little as you do, an you go to that.

Enter Father and Country Gentleman.

Fath. What riot's this in my house at this time o'

Sir Posit. Riot ! do you understand what a riot is in law ? I'll tell you ; for no man in this nation has committed more than I have.

Fath. Tell me not of law, sir. What mean these fiddles, I say, at this time o' night ?

Sir Posit. Uncle, they are mine. I am married to this lady, and resolve to be merry in your house before we go to bed.

Fath. Is that it ? I give you joy ; your cousin Emilia and this gentleman will not be long after ye.

Stanf. Sir, you are mistaken ; your daughter has disposed of herself in another place.

Wood. How the devil did he know that, Ninny ?

Ninny. He little thinks where she has bestowed herself ; ha, ha, ha !

Wood. No, no ; nor thee neither, dear rogue, ha, ha, ha !

Ninny. Well, honest Woodcock, I think I may trust thee, thou art my friend. I am the man she has made choice of, and thou shalt be my bride-man.

Wood. Ha, ha, ha, poor whelp ! how he will find himself bobbed immediately ! That this coxcomb should not find all this while that I am the man !

[*Aside.*

Fath. It cannot be ; what, without my knowledge or consent ?

Wood. Ay, ay, she's disposed on ; dear heart.

Ninny. Ay, ay, she's disposed on.

Fath. To whom ?

Stanf. To me.

Wood. To me.

Ninny. To me.

Fath. How now ! to all three ?

Car. Sir, she has taken Master Stanford, and I Master Lovel, as sure as a parson can make us.

and fortunes are not unequal to ours ; and, if they were, 'twere too late for it to be redressed.

Fath. Is this true ?

Emil. Yes, sir ; perhaps too true. [To STANFORD.]

Wood. Am I fooled after all this ? Well, I say no more, dear hearts.

Ninny. Well, let the nation sink or swim, an it will for me : henceforward, instead of heroic verse, hereafter I will show all my power, and soul, and flame, and mettle in lampoon. I durst have sworn she had loved me.

Fath. Well ! Heaven bless you together since you have done't.

Coun. Gent. So, sir, I see my cake's dough, as they say ; but I hope you'll pay the charges of my journey, d'ye see.

Sir Posit. Well, cousins, I am glad of your good fortunes ; and for my own part, if I understand anything in the world, I am happy in this lady.

Lady Vaine. Sir, you are pleased to compliment.

Enter LUCE.

Luce. Sir Positive ; here's a letter was left for you ; it comes out of the country.

Sir Posit. [*reads*] : " Sir Positive, I am informed, but know not how to believe it, that you intend to marry one that calls herself my Lady Vaine : the respect I have for your family, urges me to tell you she is a counterfeit lady, and is at present my mistress, by whom I have had one child, and I believe she's half gone of another ; all the fortune she has is what I allow her."—I have seen enough, how am I perplexed ? read, Lovel.

Fath. Come, Master Woodcock and Master Ninny, notwithstanding you are displeas'd, let's have your company a little longer.

Wood. Nay, for my part, dear heart, I do not care what becomes of me.

Lov. Don't betray yourself to the company.

[*To SIR POSITIVE.*

Sir Posit. Well! this is the first thing in the world that I have met with, which I did not understand. But I am resolved, I'll not acknowledge that. [*Aside.*] Master Lovell, I knew well enough what I did, when I married her; he's a wise man that marries a harlot, he's on the surest side. Who but an ass would marry at uncertainty?

Lov. What will not a positive coxcomb defend?

Car. Since we are all agreed, instead of a grand dance, according to the laudable custom of weddings, I have found out a little comical gentleman to entertain you with.

Enter a Boy in the habit of PUGENELLO, and traverses the stage, takes his chair, and sits down, then dances a jig.

Emil. No wedding-day was ever so troublesome as this has been to me.

Stanf. Make haste, and quit the trouble.

Now to some distant desert let's repair,
And there put off all our unhappy care;
There certainly that freedom we must find,
Which is denied to us among mankind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*





Physicians tell us, that in every age
Some one particular disease does rage ;
The scurvy once, and what you call the gout ;
But, Heaven be praised, their reign is almost out.
Yet a worse malady than both is bred,
For poetry now reigneth in their stead :
The itch of writing Plays, the more's the pity,
At once has seized the town, the Court, the City.
Amongst the rest, the poet of this day
By mere infection has produced a Play.
Once his hot fit was strong, when he was bold
To write ; but while you judge, he's in the cold ;
Yet pray consider, few of you but may
Be given up so far to write a Play ;
If not for his, for your own sakes be kind,
And give that mercy which you hope to find.





A TRUE WIDOW.







A TRUE WIDOW.



ALTHOUGH Shadwell had his full share of what somebody has called the "petulant revolt of the dramatist against the judgment of the public," it is possible to sympathise with him in his chagrin at the ill-success of his *True Widow* (produced in 1679), and also to wonder a little at that ill-success. The central *donnée* of the Play, the rascality of Lady Cheatly, is indeed improbable enough, and its crowning-point, the trick of the ink, though it has the great authority of Massinger in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, and seems to have been admitted as legitimately dramatic in the seventeenth century, is quite shockingly preposterous. But audiences do not seem to have minded this much. On the other hand, the humours of the new set of *fâcheux* who cluster round the heroes and heroines, though as always with Shadwell a little forced, are by no means unamusing. The playhouse scenes are curiously fresh and vivid; and that "ancient damnation," Lady Busy, is really a good character. If we could believe the assertion that Dryden's *Limberham* was damned because of its exposure of the "crying sin of keeping" the *True Widow* might have owed its ill-fate to much the same cause. There is an additional and extrinsic interest in the prologue which Dryden gave Shadwell for it. The next literary attention that he bestowed upon "Tom the First" was of a very different character. For the acquaintance or alliance of the two poets was within a few months broken for ever by Shadwell's libel, *The Medal of John Bayes*.





To

SIR CHARLES SEDLEY.

SIR,



HIS Play, which I here recommend to your protection, either through the calamity of the time, which made people not care for diversions, or through the anger of a great many, who thought themselves concerned in the satire, or through the want of taste in others, met not with that success from the generality of the audience which I hoped for, and you thought, and still think, it deserved: and I have the judgment of men of the best sense, besides the best of the poets, on my side in this point.

But no success whatever could have made me alter my opinion of this comedy, which had the benefit of your correction and alteration, and the honour of your approbation: and I heartily wish you had given yourself the trouble to have reviewed all my Plays, as they came incorrectly and in haste from my hands; 'twould have been more to my advantage than the assistance of Scipio and Lælius was to Terence; and I should have thought it at least as much to my honour, since by the effects I find I cannot but esteem you to be as much above both of them in wit, as either of them was above you in place in the State.

I shall not, according to the custom of Dedications, make a declamation upon your wit, the common theme of all that have any, at least of such as know you; who will acknowledge they have heard more of it drop carelessly from your mouth than they have ever seen from the labouring pen of any other. And my greatest satisfaction is that I have the honour of his friendship, and my comedies have had his approbation, whom I have heard speak more wit at a supper than all my adversaries, with their heads joined together.

copies of verses, you have in the *Mulberry Garden* shown true wit, humour, and satire of a comedy; and in *Antony and Cleopatra* the true spirit of a tragedy; the only one (except two of Jonson's and one of Shakespear's) wherein Romans are made to speak and do like Romans. There are to be found the true characters of Antony and Cleopatra as they were; whereas a French author would have made the Egyptian and the Roman both become French under his pen. And even our English authors are too much given to make true history (in their Plays) romantic and impossible; but in this Play the Romans are true Romans, and their style is such; and I dare affirm that there is not in any Play of this age so much of the spirit of the classic authors, as in your *Antony and Cleopatra*. This opinion I have, unbiassed by my friendship, and the obligations which I owe to you, often declared and shall always persist in.

After all this, since my comedies are approved and commended by you, and men of your sort, the rest of the audience must forgive me, if I am much more exalted by the praise of such as you, than I can ever be humbled by their censure.

Satire will be always unpleasant to those that deserve it. It was not my design in this Play to please a bawd of quality, a vain Selfish, a senseless, noisy Prig, a methodical blockhead having only a form of wisdom, or a coxcomb that's run stark mad after wit, which uses him very unkindly, and will never be won by him; nor did I think to please the widows in the name. The three first of these characters are wholly new, not so much as touched upon before; and the following ones are new in the greatest part. And till I see more variety of new humour than I have produced in my comedies, and more naturally drawn I shall not despair of bearing up near my contemporaries of the first rate, who write comedy, and of always surmounting the little poetasters of the fourth rate who condemn me; such as hold that wit signifies nothing in a comedy; but the putting out of candles, kicking down of tables, falling over joint-stools, impossible accidents, and unnatural mistakes (which they most absurdly call plot) are the poor things they rely upon. But 'tis the opinion of the best poets that the story of a Play ought to be carried on by working up of scenes naturally; by design, not accidents. I have endeavoured to do so in this Play; and I doubt not but the scene in the second act, wherein Lady Busy would persuade Isabella to be kept, will live when the stuff of such scribblers (more fit for drolls than Plays) shall be consumed in groceryware, tobacco, hand-boxes, and hat-cases, and be rased out of the memory of men.

I should not say so much in my own behalf if I had not met with a double injustice from some, whose design is to set up quacks.

that is to live by his wit should not vindicate that, when 'tis traduced, as well as he who is to live by his reputation may assert his honesty, when 'tis aspersed; especially since neither of them are qualities of a man's own making. But I must ask your pardon for troubling you so long with my resentments, when I should be boasting of the many favours you have done me, and giving you my thanks for them; yet I know you look for no returns when you oblige; however, I am too proud of your kindness to conceal it, and therefore shall take all opportunities I can publicly to declare myself,

Sir,

Your most Obliged,

Humble Servant,

THO. SHADWELL.¹

London, Feb. 16, 1679.

¹ In the first edition, at the back of the "Dramatis Personæ," Shadwell added this curious and characteristic note, which was (I think injudiciously) omitted in the collected *Works*:—

"Reader, Many faults in the printing have escaped by reason of my absence, while the third and fourth acts were in the Press; I shall only give you an account of some notorious errors, as p. 44 for '5s.' read '£50,' p. 47 for 'in favour' read 'infamous,' p. 48 instead of 'take it' read 'take me.' But the greatest mistake was not printing the Play in the Play in another character, that that might be known in the reading which a great many did not find in the acting of it; but take notice, two lovers, Wife and Husband are all that speak in that. In the action many doubted which belonged to the farce in the Play, and which to the Play itself, by reason of promiscuous speaking, and I found by venturing on that new thing, I ran a great risk. For some, I believe, wished all the Play like that part of a farce in it; others knew not my intention in it, which was to expose the style and plot of farce-makers to the utter confusion of damnable farce, and all its wicked and foolish adherents. But I had rather suffer, by venturing to bring new things upon the stage, than go on like a mill-horse in the same round."

PROLOGUE.

BY MR. DRYDEN.

Heaven save ye, gallants, and this hopeful age !
Y'are welcome to the downfall of the stage :
The fools have laboured long in their vocation ;
And vice (the manufacture of the nation)
O'erflocks the town so much, and thrives so well,
That fops and knaves grow drugs, and will not sell.
In vain our wares on theatres are shown,
When each has a plantation of his own.
His cruse ne'er fails ; for whatsoe'er he spends,
There's still God's plenty for himself and friends.
Should men be rated by poetic rules,
Lord ! what a poll would there be raised from fools !
Meantime poor wit prohibited must lie,
As if 'twere made some *French* commodity.
Fools you will have, and raised at vast expense ;
And yet, as soon as seen, they give offence.
Time was, when none would cry, "*That oaf was me !*"
But now you strive about your pedigree.
Bauble and cap no sooner are thrown down,
But there's a Muss^r of more than half the town.
Each one will challenge a child's part at least ;
A sign the family is well increased !
Of foreign cattle there's no longer need,
When we're supplied so fast with *English* breed.
Well ! flourish, countrymen : drink, swear, and roar ;
Let every free-born subject keep his whore ;
And wand'ring in the wilderness about,
At end of forty years not wear her out.
But, when you see these pictures, let none dare
To own beyond a limb, or single share :
For where the punk is common, he's a sot



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BELLAMOUR, a gentleman of the town, who had retired some time into the country.

CARLOS, a Gentleman returned from travel, with wit enough left to love his own country.

STANMORE, a Gentleman of the town.

SELFISH, a coxcomb conceited of his beauty, wit, and breeding, thinking all women in love with him; always admiring and talking of himself.

OLD MAGGOT, an old credulous fellow, a great enemy to wit, and a great lover of business, for business sake.

YOUNG MAGGOT, his Nephew; an Inns-of-Court man, who neglects his law, and runs mad after wit, pretending much to love, and both in spite of nature; since his face makes him unfit for one, and his brains for the other.

PRIG, a coxcomb that never talks or thinks of anything but dogs, horses, hunting, hawking, bowls, tennis, and gaming; a rook, a most noisy jockey.

LUMP, a methodical blockhead, as regular as a clock, and goes as true as a pendulum; one that knows what he shall do every day of his life by his almanac, where he sets down all his actions beforehand: a mortal enemy to wit.

Steward to Lady **CHEATLY**.

Players, Scriveners, Doorkeepers, and many other persons, the audience to the play in the Play.

LADY CHEATLY, the True Widow, that comes to town, and makes a show of a fortune, to put off herself and her two daughters.

ISABELLA, her eldest, a woman of wit and virtue.

GARTRUDE, her youngest, very foolish and whorish.

THEODOSIA, a young lady of wit and fortune, beloved by **CARLOS**.

LADY BUSY, a woman of intrigue, very busy in love matters of all kinds, too old for love of her own; always charitably helping forward that of others, very fond of young women, very wise and discreet, half bawd, half match-maker.



A TRUE WIDOW.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*Enter* BELLAMOUR *and* STANMORE.



TAN. Come, Bellamour; what, not dressed yet? Methinks, after so long a fast from wit and fine women, as you have had in the country, you should be sharper set after both than to fool away a morning thus in your chamber.

Bell. There is a respect due from a country gentleman to a new suit and peruke; they must not be hastily put on. And the women of this town, if you don't take care of your own outside will never let you be acquainted with their insides.

Stan. Thou art mistaken; men succeed now according to the clothes they give, not those they wear.

Bell. Amongst your little whores, Stanmore.

Stan. And amongst your great whores too, Bellamour. I knew a gentleman who was so ugly a modish spark would scarce give him a livery; yet by a correspondence he kept with a tailor and shoemaker at Paris, and

Bell. How so?

Stan. Why, she had always the fashion a month before any of the Court ladies; never wore anything made in England; scarce washed there; and had all the affected new words sent her before they were in print, which made her pass among fops for a kind of French wit.

Bell. But were not these French petticoats, though given by one man, taken up by many?

Stan. Faith, I think not; she considered her own vanity above any man's address; though one lord made coaches at her; another squeezed in his fat sides at her till he looked like a full sack; a third writ lamentable sonnets to her; a fourth observed her motions in the Park, which, by the way, is the new method of making love.

Bell. What, do they make love without speaking to one another?

Stan. A great many very fine gentlemen to look at, better than with it: your side-glass let down hastily when the party goes by is very passionate, if she side-glass you again—for that's the new word. Ply her next day with a billet-doux, and you have her sure.

Bell. What if we chance to go the same way, or she won't receive my billet-doux, as you call it?

Stan. For the first, it must never chance; you must instruct your coachman; and, for the second, after such an advance as side-glassing of you if she refuse your billet she is a jilt, and you must rail at her in all companies.

Bell. I am pretty good at railing, but not so good as thou art, Stanmore.

Stan. I had forgotten half: you must turn as she turns; quit the Park when she goes out; pass by her twice or thrice between that and St. James's; talk to her at night in the drawing-room——

Bell. Before forty coxcombs and then the business is

Stan. 'Tis all one, it must be so, or you will pass for an old-fashioned lover and never succeed beyond a chambermaid.

Bell. This is a folly of our own growth; it came not to us out of France.

Stan. That nation has at this time no folly so harmless.

Bell. But if there be any stirring, of what kind soever, our empty young fellows will be sure to fill themselves with it and prefer it to all the sense and good breeding of their own country. But now we talk of France, I wonder we see not Carlos; he was expected from thence two or three nights since.

Enter CARLOS.

Stan. See where he comes. Dear Carlos! I could not run more hastily upon my mistress after a long absence; thou art the delight of all thy friends, and even thy enemies take a malignant pleasure to behold thy shape, that feature and that mien.

Car. Hold, Stanmore! I think thou tak'st me for a mistress indeed by thy compliments, which I know not how to return.

Stan. Thou art so improved; a man must love as I do not to envy thee.

Car. Enough, Stanmore; your friendship blinds you—I never knew any of these loving rogues good for anything. [*Aside.*] Bellamour, I am o'erjoyed to see thee here; I heard thou hadst forsworn the town.

Bell. Now I see Carlos here methinks I am a perfect man of the town again; I only forswore it for a time. 'Faith, money is a thing gotten in ill company and spent in good; I have been laying up.

Car. Men-of-war, after a warm engagement, must into the docks to be new built for fight.

Bell. Right; but how go matters in France? What

Car. What with governors, ladies' eldest sons, ambassadors and envoys, you have 'em here almost as soon as the French themselves.

Stan. No alteration since we were there?

Car. Wit and women are quite out of fashion; so are flutes, doux, and fiddlers; drums and trumpets are their only music.

Bell. 'Tis but ill music for their neighbours.

Car. At home they are always roaring out *Te Deums* for stealing of some town or other; war and equipage is their discourse; which, by the way, is so pompous that should they conquer Europe they would scarce be savers.

Stan. How came wit and women out of fashion?

Car. Why, in camps they learn to live without women; and for wit great men that love to play the fool in quiet find it troublesome.

Bell. 'Faith, the latter of these is a great grievance here; our great men hate wit, but love damned flattery, though never so fulsome.

Car. Pray, what fools does this town afford?

Stan. Very choice ones; we'll bring you where you shall enjoy 'em. There is a widow lately come to town who sets up for a great fortune, has taken a good house, and lives very splendidly, I suppose, with the intention to put off herself and two daughters, who are very pretty; one of which Bellamour is in love with.

Bell. I make love to her, I confess; but 'tis a harmless lambent flame, and aims but at fornication. But Stanmore is in love with the other, and Heaven knows what that may end in.

Stan. I have no designs upon her fortune; I aim only at her person; I yet run at the whole herd.

Car. Come, you know your own tempers no more in love than in play, where those who are very stingy at first will bleed deeply at last.

Bell. This widow, by name the Lady Cheatly has

masters, ladies of all sorts, and young heirs. Amongst the rest of fops there is young Maggot, one whom his uncle, whose heir he is, bred at the Inns-of-Court and intended for the law. But he has left that and is run wit-mad; thinks of nothing, endeavours at nothing but to be a wit and a lover, and both in spite of nature.

Stan. And though he has made love and wit his whole business, he has gotten no farther yet than to be thought a wit by the fools, and an ass by the witty men.

Car. This is a choice spirit. Indeed, 'tis a general folly; for wit is a common idol, that every coxcomb worships in his heart, though some blockheads of business dissemble it.

Bell. But there is another coxcomb of that extreme vanity, that Nature, amongst all her variety of fops, has not produced the like; he draws all lines of discourse to the centre of his own person, and never was known to speak, but "I did," or "I said," was at the beginning or end of it.

Stan. He is as lean as a skeleton, and yet sets up for shape: he changed his tailor twice, because his shoulder-bones stick out.

Bell. He thinks all women in love with him, and all men his intimate friends; he will make *doux yeux* to a Judge upon the bench, and not despair of getting a widow at her husband's funeral; thinks himself very well bred, and welcome at all times to all people, though sober among drunkards, and without a penny in his pocket to men deep at play.

Car. Oh! I remember this coxcomb; he has no fortune, and yet is always talking of equipage and dressing. 'Tis selfish. But do any women favour that fop?

Stan. Oh, yes. There is no more account to be given of their love before they know man, than their longings

Car. They do most things by chance; but when they choose, 'tis ever for the worst.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. Mr. Selfish is combing his peruke below stairs, and will be here instantly.

Bell. Retire, while I show him. [*They retire.*]

Enter SELFISH, sets his peruke, and bows to the glass.

Sel. How dost thou do, Bellamour? You fat fellows have always glasses that make one look so thin.

Bell. You look in it much as you do out on't.

Sel. Sure I am not so lean; I was told I looked pretty plump to-day. Ha! my damned rogue has put me into the most bustling^r stuff. Bellamour, I like thy breeches well.

Bell. Why, you don't see 'em.

Sel. Yes, I see 'em in the glass; your tailor shall make mine. A pox on my valet de chambre! how he has tied my cravat up to-day! A man cannot get a good valet de chambre, French or English.

Bell. A French one is fittest for him, because he can fast best. [*Aside.*]

Sel. I begin to belly, I think very much: I must go into France and flux; 'twill do my complexion good, as well as my shape.

Bell. Why, thou art fit to be hung up at Barber-Surgeons-Hall for a skeleton; a woman had as good lie with a faggot.

Sel. Thou art envious; the ladies are of another mind. I am sure you are above whore-master's weight, and a woman had as good lie with a pound of candles.

Bell. Enough of this; there is a friend of mine, one Carlos, lately come from France, that understands dressing; I must bring you together.

^r The verb "hustle" seems to be here used in the sense of the

Sel. You talk of my leanness! I had the most lucky adventure. I was happy in the conversation of a pretty person of quality, young and witty; I went in a coach with my hand in her neck, from the Duke's Play-house to the Pall Mall, kissing her all the way.

Bell. There is a thing happened to me, in which I have occasion for your assistance and advice.

Sel. I have lately succeeded in the affections of so many pretty creatures, 'faith, I know not how to turn my hands to 'em, poor rogues. If you did but see the advances that all the ladies that come to the widow's and her daughters make to me, you would stand amazed; and so should I, but that I am used to those things.

Car. This fool is much improved since I went into France.

Stan. Fools always improve in folly as witty men in understanding.

Car. Indeed, he has great acquired parts.

Sel. Bellamour, fare thee well; I must go home and answer two or three billet-doux from persons of quality. I have a bushel in a year. Adieu! [*Exit.*

Car. A most admirable coxcomb! He is so full of himself he ne'er minds another man, and so answers quite from the purpose.

Bell. He never answers any man, nor cares to be answered; he desires but to be heard. But come, Carlos, let's take the air, and while away a dining time.

Car. I hate a dinner. 'Tis a good meal for a dull, plodding fellow of business, that must bait like a carrier's horse, and then to plodding again, but the supper is the meal of pleasure and enjoyment.

Stan. Supping indeed is a solemn thing, and should be used but with few. Every blockhead can dine.

Bell. That is, fill a belly. But there are few men fit

Enter YOUNG MAGGOT.

Y. Mag. Your servant, gentlemen. I see, Bellamour, you are going abroad. I only come to show you my last verses.

Bell. Your last verses! I would I could be so happy as to see them.

Y. Mag. You have company and I have business. Some other time.

Bell. What business?

Y. Mag. Why, wit and beauty; I know no other. I am longed for by the ladies now to give account of the Play; for the poets will not write, the players act, nor the ladies censure without my judgment first.

Bell. The ladies are indeed your finger-watches, that go just as you set them.

Y. Mag. 'Faith, that's very well imagined, well said. I think thou hast near as much wit as one of us writers.

Car. What is your opinion of the Play?

Y. Mag. I saw it scene by scene, and helped him in the writing. It breaks well, the protasis good, the catastrophe excellent. There's no episode, but the catastrophe is admirable. I lent him that, and the love parts, and the songs. There are a great many sublimes that are very poetical.

Stan. Poetical, in his judgment, is always fustian and nonsense in another's. I warrant 'tis some roaring, ranting play that's upon the fret all the while.

Bell. Will you carry us to a rehearsal?

Y. Mag. 'Tis a familiarity among us writers to see one another naked. You are men of wit and desperate critics, and we poets fear you, as singing birds do a hawk.

Car. Thank you for your hawk.

Y. Mag. Ay, was it not well said?

Y. Mag. They can't hurt us. Besides, a dedication, writing songs for their mistresses, or showing them a play beforehand, will take them off.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, Mr. Prig is coming up.

Y. Mag. Now shall we be troubled with fools. A man can never enjoy thee half an hour to himself, thou art so haunted with fops.

Bell. How insupportable the rogues are one to another!

Car. What is this Prig.

Stan. He is an universal gamester, an admirable horse and dog herald. Knows all the remarkable ones, their families and alliances; is indeed more intimately acquainted with beasts than men; and 'tis fit he should be so.

Bell. He is, in short, a led-eater, intelligencer, and dry jester to gaming and jockey lords; flatters, rooks, and passes for a jolly companion amongst 'em; and makes those things, which are but the recreations of men of sense, his whole business.

Enter PRIG.

Prig. Gentlemen, good morrow, though I think 'tis almost noon. Where was you last night? If you had been at my Lord Squander's you had seen the best play you had seen this month. My lord lost a thousand pound; Jack Sharper won three hundred; Tom Whiskin a hundred; my Lord Whimsey lost five hundred; Sir Thomas Rantipol lost six hundred; Sir Nicholas Whachum won two hundred; and the rooks were very busy.

Stan. Then you were not idle.

Prig. No, 'faith; but I am come to get you to look

brother of Red Rose ; his sister is the White Mare, the cousin-german of Crack-a-Fart ; cousin once removed to Nutmeg ; third cousin to my Lord Squander's colt ; allied to Flea Bitten by the second venter. In short, he is of an excellent family, and I am going to make a civil visit to him. He's to run for the plate at Brackley, Stamford, and Newmarket, and goes out of town to-morrow.

Bell. We cannot see him ; we're engaged.

Prig. Engaged ! no, 'faith, let's make a match at tennis to-day. I was invited to dine by two or three lords ; but if you will let me have pen, ink, and paper I'll send my dispatches, and disengage myself. How will that gentleman and you play with Stanmore, and I keep his back hand, at Gibbons's ?

Bell. I do not know his play.

Prig. We'll take a bisk of you.

Bell. No, you shan't.

Prig. You're half fifteen better than I to a grain.

Stan. No, that he is not.

Prig. I never heard the like in my life. Gad, you'll never let me make a reasonable match with you. You beat Sharper at a bisk, and he beats me. What will Stanmore and you give Maggot and me at Whitehall, and play the best of your play ? Half ?

Y. Mag. I never play ; I stay at home and write.

Prig. Pish ! 'tis all one for that. We'll play with you at a bisk and a bault for twenty pound.

Y. Mag. I will not, sir.

Prig. Come, I'll hold you twenty pound you do not make a fairer match. Let me see—hold—anon—hum—ha—ay—'tis just so to a hair's breadth. Come, we'll play it.

Bell. I tell you, I am engaged to-day.

Prig. We'll play, or pay, to-morrow at ten. Where shall we sup ?

Prig. Not sup?

Bell. No; you are not fit to sup.

Prig. No! I am sure I have as good a stomach, and will eat two meals a day with any man that wears a head.

Car. That will not do.

Prig. No? I'll eat three then. What say you, Maggot? Will you play?

Y. Mag. I will never play as long as I live, at that or anything else, while I can have pen, ink, and paper.

Prig. O Lord! O Lord! I would not say so for all the world.

Bell. A man must use exercise to keep himself down; he will belly else, and the ladies will not like him.

Y. Mag. I have another way to bring down my belly.

Stan. Another? What's that?

Y. Mag. Why, I study; I study and write. 'Tis exercise of the mind does it. I have none of the worst shapes or complexions. 'Tis writing and inventing does my business.

Car. Will that do it, sir?

Prig. Think? What a pox should a gentleman think of but dogs, horses, dice, tennis, bowls, races, or cock-fighting? The devil take me, I never think of anything else, but now and then of a whore (when I have a mind to her).

Car. This is strange, Mr. Maggot, and very curious. How do you know how much you fall away in a day's time?

Y. Mag. I have an engine to weigh myself when I sit down to write or think, and when I unbend myself again.

Prig. How do you unbend?

Y. Mag. Why, I unbend my imagination, my intellect.

Prig. How do you unbend? I don't know, sir, what is that? Is it

Y. Mag. How I scorn fops!—Why, I have been in love these two months, and I have wasted above fourteen pounds. Love is a great preserver of the shape, a very great one. You know my mistress, the widow's youngest daughter.

Car. This is a curious coxcomb.

Prig. Love! Ay, if a man gets a clap, 'twill take him down.

Y. Mag. May it take down your nose, you unthinking animal.

Prig. What a devil does he mean?

Y. Mag. Why, I weighed myself when I writ my last song, and I wasted six ounces, a voidupois weight, in the writing; and I was not above twelve hours about it.

Car. I beseech you, let's hear it, sir.

Y. Mag. With all my heart.

“Damon, see how charming Chloris,
 Who gives love to all that see her,
 Burning us, yet in coldness glories,
 And is never, never freer.
 Though darts and flames from her eye fly, sir,
 And her breast is warm and spicy;
 Yet there is coldness in her eye, sir,
 And her heart's all over icy.
 By coldness I am more inflamed,
 As in winter is spring-water:
 My love by scorn cannot be tamed,
 But I the rather would be at her.”

Prig. Did this make you waste six ounces? I writ a song the other day, and it did not make me waste at all.

Bell. Prithee, Prig, let's hear it.

[PRIG sings.]

“One night walking in a wood

As e'er she could :
 But she fired my blood,
 And I to her stood.
 With a hey, boys, ding, ding, ding, boys, hey.
 With a hey, boys, ding, ding, ding.
 Quoth I, ' My pretty buxom lass,
 From me this time thou shalt not pass
 In any case,
 For the sake of thy face,
 I'll lay thee on the grass.'
 With a hey, boys, ding," &c.

Y. Mag. Oh, what violence does he to my ears !

Prig. What, does he not like it? Pox! These wits like nothing but what they do themselves. I love a tavern song, that will roar, and make one merry ; a pox of his Strephons and Phillis's !

Bell. What will become of you, Young Maggot? Your uncle Maggot, that common foe to wit, is coming up.

Y. Mag. Hide me, gentlemen, hide me ; I am undone if he finds me in your company.

Bell. Step in there. [YOUNG MAGGOT *retires.*

Enter MAGGOT.

Mag. Gentlemen, I come to look out an ungracious nephew of mine, who, I hear, by virtue of your company, sets up for a wit. Will any of you keep him when you have made him good for nothing ?

Bell. Good for nothing ! Why, he is the darling of the ladies ; they dote on him for his songs, and fear him for his lampoons ; and the men think no debauch perfect without him.

Mag. Yes, I hear he writ a libel. I shall have him scribble away his ears, or write himself so far into the

Car. The disasters, rather.

Mag. The world will bear with you that have estates, though you have a little; but 'tis enough to undo a man that is to make his fortune. My roguy nephew must leave Coke upon Littleton for Beaumont and Fletcher.

Stan. Poetry is an ornament to a man of any profession.

Mag. 'Tis a damned weed, and will let nothing good or profitable grow by it; 'tis the language of the devil, and begun with oracles. Where did you know a wit thrive, or indeed keep his own?

Car. They part with their money for pleasure, and fools part with their pleasure for money; the one will make a better last will and testament, but the other lead a happier life.

Y. Mag. "Profit, begone; what art thou but a breath?
I'll live, proud of my infamy and shame,
Graced with the triumphs of a poet's name:
Men can but say, Wit did my reason blind:
And wit's the noblest frailty of the mind."

Methinks it runs well thus.

Mag. What noise is that? Ha! My ungracious nephew repeating verses! Come out, you rascal! dost thou not tremble at my anger? Thou, that mightest have been a judge in time, to make a wit of thyself thus!

Bell. Good sir, be patient; did not the great pleader Cicero make verses?

Mag. And you see what came on't; he died a beggar, and of a violent death.

Y. Mag. Sir, the verses were not my own.

Mag. Sir, begone to the Temple, and let me once more find you at wit and I'll disinherit you.

Y. Mag. Good sir, hear me.

Mag. Begone, I say.

Bell. There is a powerful faction against wit.

Stan. Come, let's take the air. [Exeunt omnes.]

Enter Lady CHEATLY and Mr. LUMP, her brother.

Lump. I see, lady sister, you are resolved to push on the remnant of your estate, and make the snuff of your fortune burn clearest.

Lady Cheat. As my fortune was, it would do us no good; but this town, and the way I take, may advance it, or, at least, dispose of my own person.

Lump. You shall not want my money, so long as I have deeds of trust from you; you shall have the name on't. I have helped you to sober, solid, godly men, who will help to carry on your design.

Lady Cheat. Some cautious old fellow or other (who is wise enough to have his own wisdom contribute to the cheating of him) may snap at me; and some rash, amorous young fellows may catch at my daughters.

Lump. I wish you had set up in the city among our party, and gone to meetings, it might have been a great advantage. I myself have made much benefit of religion, as to my temporal concerns, and (so long as it be directed to a good end) it is a pious fraud, and very lawful.

Lady Cheat. No, brother, the godly have two qualities which would spoil my design: great covetousness (which would make 'em pry too narrowly into our fortune) and much eating (which would too soon devour what I have left).

Lump. Reproach not the godly, lady sister; I do not like it.

Lady Cheat. Where is there a better market for beauty, than near the Court? And who will more likely snap at the shadow of a good fortune, than the gentlemen of this end of the town, who are most of 'em in debt? And I have chosen the best instrument in the world to

Lump. Who is that?

Lady Cheat. A very busy old gentleman, and very credulous, that loves to tell news, and always magnifies a true story till it becomes a lie; one Mr. Maggot.

Lump. I know he is a person of parts, but he is not solid; he's hot-brained, and has not method in him. For my own part, I think not any one wise who does not know what he shall do this day fifty years, if he lives; I, for my part, do.

Lady Cheat. I hope 'tis dining with me, brother.

Lump. No, upon the one and twentieth of March, I shall, fifty years hence, dine with Mr. Ananias Felt, an elder of our church, if we live, and he observe his method; my journal tells what I shall do each day of my life.

Lady Cheat. Can you tell what you shall do next Midsummer Day fifty years?

Lump. I shall go down to my house in Kent.

Lady Cheat. Do you never alter your day?

Lump. By no means; if one link of the chain be broken, wisdom falls to the ground.

Lady Cheat. What do you do upon the sixth day of May come fifty year?

Lump. This book will tell you—*May—May* 6th. Let me see—6th—6th—I take physic, and shave myself.

Lady Cheat. What, sick or well; beard or no beard?

Lump. 'Tis all one for that; I never break my method. Let me see—the next day—I walk to Hampstead, dine at the “Queen's Head,” come back in my coach, visit Sir Formal Trifle, and at night I do communicate with my wife.

Lady Cheat. Not fifty years hence; you'll go near to break that method.

Lump. I never break any No man can be wise without this principle But, sister, I am to give you a

town ; wits are good for nothing, of no use in a commonwealth ; they understand not business.

Lady Cheat. The better for my purpose ; they value pleasure, and will bid high for't.

Lump. I say they are good for nothing ; they are not men of method and business.

Lady Cheat. So fools say, who seem to be excellent men of business, because they always make a business of what is none ; and seem to be always very industrious, because they take great pains for what a witty man does with ease.

Lump. You are out, you are out ; hang 'em ! Wits ! when did you see any of 'em rise ?

Lady Cheat. No, because the fools are so numerous and strong, they keep 'em down : or rather, because men of wit (that have fortunes) know what a senseless thing the drudgery of business and authority is ; and those that have none, want the impudence, flattery, and importunity of blockheads.

Lump. I fear you are tainted, vilely tainted with wit ; if you had fixed in the city, you might have 'scaped the infection, nobody would have put you in the head of wit there. But hold, my hour is come. At three a clock I will throw away a quarter of an hour upon you. Farewell. [Exit LUMP.]

Lady Cheap. Who waits there ?

Enter Steward.

Oh, my good Steward ! Are the scriveners come ?

Steward. Yes, madam. Your design prospers beyond our hopes ; it has taken fire like a train, and run through all the town ; and all believe you to be a great fortune.

Lady Cheat. I have chosen as proper an engine for my business as can be, my Lady Busy, a perpetual gossiper, a visitor in all families, a very wise lady, a great tattler and newsmonger ; who, being something too old for an intrigue of her own, is as good a body to help on those

of others as can be, and is glad to bring lovers of any kind together.

Steward. Already the belief of your wealth has spread so far, that I have had two of the city this morning with me, who (having been shrewdly bitten by goldsmiths) are very desirous to trust their money in your hands, hearing what mortgages you have, and believing you can employ it better than anybody.

Lady Cheat. You did not, sure, refuse 'em?

Steward. No, I'll warrant you, madam, they will bring their money presently; Mr. Maggot too entreats me, that I will be very importunate with your ladyship, to employ a thousand pounds of his for him.

Lady Cheat. There needs no importunity. Subtile rogue! he thinks to lay it here for a nest-egg, and that I shall lay many more to it, which he hopes he may have again, together with my person.

Steward. No, madam, 'tis held in mortmain, never to return again. Besides, we have presents enough to keep your house this month, brought in this morning; a red deer potted, a brace of fat does, hams of Bayonne bacon, a brace of swans, potted chairs, Brant geese, and (besides all this), a piece of the best wine in England. Here are the names of the presenters.

Lady Cheat. Let me see; all well-willers to myself or daughters. Cunning fools! how very political they are! Well, policy is most commonly the foolishest thing in the world.

Steward. Madam, there are a great many waiting about money business without; shall I call any of 'em in?

Lady Cheat. By no means, when I am alone. When company is with me, they are of use, and spread my fame abroad. Entertain 'em well, and bid 'em hasten dinner.

[*Exeunt.*]



ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I—*Enter* LADY CHEATLY *and* LADY BUSY.



LADY CHEAT. Madam, I am infinitely obliged to your ladyship, who can be so careful of my whole family.

Lady Busy. Why truly, madam, I love to do good offices; we are bound in Christian charity to one another; and I wished Mr. Maggot to your ladyship, if he be not somewhat too old for the vigour of your ladyship. He is rich, and is discreet, and his other defects may be supplied elsewhere.

Lady Cheat. Your ladyship's very obliging.

Lady Busy. If not, there's Mr. Prig, an ingenious gentleman, of a pretty fortune, whom I wished to you; he is in great favour with lords; I warrant you, you shall seldom take him without a lord in his mouth; they so court him, they love him mightily.

Lady Cheat. And he loves lords mightily for being so.

Lady Busy. Oh, mightily! Well, madam, your two daughters are accounted the beauties of the Drawing-room; there's nobody, while they are there, will vouchsafe to look upon a maid of honour; no, not they; and they are so mad at it.

Lady Cheat. 'Tis not the beauty of my daughters makes 'em look at 'em so; but they like an indifferent new face, better than those faces they are used to every night. They are weary of 'em.

Lady Busy. Oh, no! really your daughters are the prettiest creatures in town, and I would have 'em well settled, one way or other; I have had several offers of husbands for 'em, but I do not think I have yet met with fortunes good enough. But that great lord, I told you of, is very pressing to enjoy your eldest, and, as I said, he offers a thousand pounds down, and three hundred pound per annum during life; but that I know your ladyship is discreet, and one that has seen the world, I dared not have propounded this to you.

Lady Cheat. My daughters have fortunes enough to marry 'em to good estates; but your ladyship is wise. 'Tis good to treat with all persons, and all ways, to settle a young girl in the world.

Lady Busy. Why, madam, this will be a great addition to her fortune; and, besides, you do not know how he may prefer her. Or, for aught we know, after he has tried her, he may like her so well as to own her—who knows? Be pleased to consider how marriage is cried down, and that there are few, that are good for anything, will think on't nowadays: Besides, custom alters all things mightily. Mothers very frequently do this for their daughters now; and if it be a fashion, you know——

Lady Cheat. I am very much obliged to your ladyship's advice; I have propounded it to my daughter, but she is so perverse, she will not listen to me, but says she had rather marry a groom, than be mistress to a prince.

Lady Busy. O fie! she has a wrong notion of the thing. I will try to advise her better.

Lady Cheat. Your ladyship will do me a great favour: Here they come both.

*Enter ISABELLA and GARTRUDE.*¹

Lady Busy. Ladies, your servant.

Isab. and Gart. Your ladyship's most humble servant.

¹ The form *Gartrude* is no doubt an instance of the pronunciation which has survived in Derby, Cherwell, and other proper names.

Lady Busy. Mistress Isabella, I have something to advise you for your good.

Isab. For my good, madam?

Lady Busy. Yes, madam; and therefore be pleased to give attention to me.

Isab. Good manners will make me do that.

Lady Busy. Why, look you; you are young, I am in years, an ancient woman, and have seen the world, as they say.

Isab. Ancient? Your ladyship looks very youthfully.

Lady Busy. No, no; you are pleased to compliment: but, as I said, my lady and myself have known the world, as the saying is.

Isab. And you the flesh and the devil, as the saying is. [*Aside.*

Lady Busy. And 'tis fit the young should submit themselves to the gravity and discretion of the old.

Isab. Yes, where they can find it. [*Aside.*

Lady Busy. Go to. My lady is a person whose aim is to settle you well in the world—do you conceive me?—and she knows what's fittest and most convenient for you. And obedience is the best virtue.

Isab. Very well, madam.

Lady Busy. Now there is a certain lord whom my lady has mentioned to you.

Isab. A lord? a beast; and one that would make me as bad as himself.

Lady Cheat. Good Mrs. Pert, keep in that foolish instrument, your tongue. A beast! There are a great many like him.

Lady Busy. Be not so forward; all things have two faces—do not look upon the wrong one. Go to. You are a fine young lady, and are brought by your lady mother to town, the general mart for beauty. Well—you would be so settled in the world, as to have a certain fund, whereon you may rely, which in age may

Isab. I hope I shall have enough to keep me honest.

Lady Busy. Nay, Heaven forbid I should persuade you to be dishonest: virtue is a rare thing, a heavenly thing.¹ But, I say still, be mindful of the main—alas! a woman is a solitary, helpless creature without a man, God knows—good—how may this man be had? In marriage, say you?—very well—if you could get a fine gentleman with money enough; but alas! those do not marry, they have left it off. The customs of the world change in all ages.

Isab. In ours, for the worse.

Lady Busy. Very well said, but yet the wisest must obey 'em, as they change; do you conceive, madam?

Isab. Yes, I do conceive you to be doing a very reverend office. [*Aside.*

Gart. Methinks her ladyship speaks a great deal of reason; she's a fine-spoken lady truly.

Lady Busy. Now I say, since custom has so run down wedlock, what remains but that we should make use of the next thing to it?—good. Nay, not but that virtue is a rare thing—Heaven forbid I should detract from that—but, I say, the main is to be respected; a good deal of money—there's the point.

Isab. With little or no reputation—there's the point.

Lady Cheat. Money brings reputation, fool; or at least puts one into that condition, that fellows dare not question it.

Lady Busy. Nay, Heaven forbid you should lose that; but, I say, the next thing to marriage is being kind to a noble lord, &c. And if good terms be made, and you be well settled in the world——

Isab. That would be to be settled out of the world; for I should never dare to show my face again.

Lady Cheat. There are as good faces as yours, and

¹ It is not improbable that Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs, who must have known the playhouses well, was thinking of this wise saying when she made her own immortal remark to

better, my nimble chaps, that are shown every day in the playhouse, after it, and with the best quality too.

Lady Busy. Yes, and in the front-boxes—nay, nay; not but that a good wealthy marriage is beyond it.

Isab. A very comfortable thing, for a gentlewoman, to bring herself into a condition of never conversing with a woman of quality, who has wit and honour, again; but must sort with those tawdry, painted things of the town.

Gart. Can't you keep company with my mother and me?

Lady Busy. Look you, madam, you are under a great mistake; for do not ladies of wit and honour keep daily company with those things, as you call them? But d'ye conceive me, the finest things—the gayest things—and some the richest things—I say no more. I pray conceive me—as long as you are true to one man, madam, you are, in a manner, his lady; I say, in a manner, his lady: 'tis a kind of marriage, and great persons most commonly cohabit longer with mistresses than they used to do with their wives.

Lady Cheat. My lady says right; 'tis nowadays more like marriage than marriage itself.

Gart. Oh, sister! do what my lady says; she's a rare person.

Lady Busy. A thousand pound, and three hundred pound per annum—say, we bring him to four hundred pound; good—a great lord—that is in the way to prefer you; very good—or may be, may like you so well as to own you—best of all; consider. 'Tis enough, madam, at once; let her ruminat upon this.

Gart. O Lord! pray 'sister, do; why, we shall all be made; prithee do.

Isab. Go you to your Mr. Maggot, that dies, and makes songs for you.

Gart. No, I'll swear, he's a fine witty person: but he has such a grievous face, I can't abide it. But there's

Mr. Selfish is the most genteel, well-bred gentleman, and has the finest ways among ladies ; he will tell you such pretty things of himself ; he talks of himself always so prettily, and says such neat, genteel, well-bred things to one.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Madam, some gentlemen are coming in.

Lady Cheat. Bid the scriveners and the rest of the people come in. Daughters, go, and walk in the garden—I hope your ladyship will pardon me ; this money business must be minded. [*Exeunt Daughters.*]

Lady Busy. By all means, madam : I'll go make a visit. Your servant. [*Exit LADY BUSY.*]

Enter Scriveners, and several others.

Scriv. I have brought the mortgage ; and the mortgagor is here ready to seal, upon the payment of the within-named sum.

Lady Cheat. Has my counsel perused it ?

Coun. Yes, and find it to be very well drawn.

Lady Cheat. Let me read it.

Enter STANMORE, BELLAMOUR, CARLOS, and MAGGOT.

Stew. The company is come.

Lady Cheat. Peace ; I see 'em.

Mag. Look you ! did I not tell you, she's always thus busy ? I warrant, upon a mortgage, or a purchase ; she's a vast fortune ; I know where her money lies, and in what hands ; she has a vast deal. Do not interrupt her ; you shall hear.

Bell. Then you know all ?

Mag. Know all ? ay ; why, Sir William, her late husband was my intimate friend. Know ! why, I hired this house, and bought all the furniture for her. Her daughters will be worth ten thousand pound a-piece at least to my knowledge.

Mag. I knew her father as well as any man in the world. Know! why, I know all.

Car. This lady must be a cheat, by doing her business so publicly.

Mag. Mr. Carlos, I knew your father as well as any man in England: honest James, his keeper! I have had many a buck of him.

Bell. Did you know my father?

Mag. Did I? no flesh alive better: I did more for him than any man in England; I was a father to him.

Bell. Ay! then you are my grandfather. But how were you a father to him?

Mag. How? why. I gave him his second wife.

Counsel [*reads*]. "To have and to hold——"

Lady Cheat. 'Tis very well; five thousand pound is the sum; Steward, pay him the money, and take the writings.

Mag. Look you there! did not I tell you?

1st Citizen. Well, she's a rare woman at business!

2nd Citizen. As ever I saw.

Stew. Here are the two gentlemen I spoke of, who humbly desire to place some money in your ladyship's hands.

Lady Cheat. I do not love to meddle with other people's money, you know; besides, I shall no occasion. I have a great sum to be paid in within this fortnight.

Stew. I know it, madam; but if a purchase should be offered in the meantime——

1st Citizen. I beseech your ladyship, take our money, we have been so cheated by base goldsmiths, we are afraid to trust anybody but your ladyship.

Lady Cheat. I do not love to stand charged for other people's money—Oh me, gentlemen! I was so busy I did not see you; you have not waited long, I hope? Pray forgive my rudeness.

Lady Cheat. By no means; you do me honour.

Stan. Madam, we take the liberty to present Mr. Carlos, a friend of ours, lately come out of France, to your ladyship.

Lady Cheat. Sir, I have heard of your noble family, and you'll honour mine in your acquaintance with it. Sweet Mr. Maggot, your servant. Gentlemen, have but a little patience, till I have dispatched some business, and I'll wait on you.

Mag. God! she's the finest person in the world, and a vast fortune! I would my ungracious nephew had one of her daughters.

Enter PRIG.

Prig. Madam, your most humble servant.

Lady Cheat. Your servant, sweet Mr. Prig.

Prig. Sweet Mr. Prig! good; matters go on well. Comé, gentlemen, since my lady's busy, let's go to langtriloo or ombre.

Car. Is there no way of spending our time but playing?

Prig. None so good. Why, what a pox should one do?

Car. Read; it is a manly diversion.

Prig. Read? so I have read Markham, "The Complete Farrier," and two or three books about horses; a book that's written about ombre, and that about picquet; and for other books, pox! there's nothing in 'em at all. What think you, Bellamour?

Bell. You are in the right.

Prig. Look you there! there's nothing in 'em, ha.

Stan. Methinks discourse is a pretty good way of passing one's time.

Prig. Gad, so it is; I talk as much as any man in England; my tongue seldom lies still. Oh! I love

think on't, have you ever hunted with my Lord Squander's fox-dogs, Bellamour?

Bell. No. Now he's in.

Prig. They are the best in England; but there is one dog we call Ranter. I christened him, I was his godfather; he was gotten upon my lord's famous bitch Lady; you remember what a bitch she was. Oh, poor Lady! I was not sorrier when my sister died, than when poor Lady died. But let that pass; Ranter was got by your father's dog, Rockwood.

Bell. Did you know Rockwood?

Prig. Know him? As well as any man in the world; his father was a dog of my father's, called Jowler; his mother was my noble Lord Squander's father's famous bitch Venus, which you have heard of; I remember, Mr. Carlos, Venus was sister to your father's dog Ringwood. Rockwood? I knew him as well as I knew your father; well, rest their souls; of a dog and a man, I shall never see two better in the field than Rockwood and your father.

Car. How the rogue has coupled them!

Prig. Yet Ranter's an admirable dog, the best at a cold scent that ever I saw; if there be forty couple in the field, I'll hold a hundred pound he works it out soonest and leads 'em all when he has done. I love and honour Ranter, I care not who knows it; I made a song of him, have his picture by my bedside, and some of his hair here in a crystal locket.

Mag. I beseech your ladyship, accept of my thousand pound; 'twill make up the money for that purchase, sweet madam.

Lady Cheat. Well, sir, since you will have it so, I'll give my bond for it.

Mag. Oh, madam! I scorn it; I'll have nothing under hand for it.

Lady Cheat. Then I will not take it; nay, I have

Mag. Well, I'll go and fetch it; and your ladyship and I will agree upon that. [*Exit* MAGGOT.

Prig. Ha! the young ladies are in the garden.

Bell. Say you so? Prithee let's steal down to 'em.

Prig. Do, and leave me with the widow.

Exeunt BELLAMOUR, STANMORE, and CARLOS.

Lady Cheat. Steward, do you take care of all the rest while I retire from (what I do not care for) business. Now I am at leisure; are the gentlemen gone?

Prig. They are gone but into the garden, and will wait on your ladyship presently. They have left me that happy opportunity I wished for, to renew the suit I so often made to your ladyship. I beseech you, madam, be pleased to consider my passion, which is so violent for your ladyship, I cannot rest since first I saw your ladyship; for it has indeed put me beside myself. I have not the heart to ride so much as one heat at Newmarket since, and I used to go once in ten days down on purpose; nor have I been able to ride a fox-chase, since I have had your ladyship in chase; I shall be undone if your ladyship don't quiet my mind with some assurance: I overset at trick-track, dealt myself ten at ombre, and all through my passion for your dear self.

Lady Cheat. Sir, though I have a great esteem for your passion, yet we widows that have some fortune, are to consider something besides passion.

Prig. As I have told you before, my estate is not inconsiderable, besides the great favour I have with the gaming and jockey lords; and besides, if the king frequents Newmarket, I doubt not but in a short time to rise.

Lady Cheat. But you are a gamester.

Prig. Ay, madam! but I never play, I do but rook.

Lady Cheat. Rook? What's that? Cheat?

Prig. No, madam. I go to twelve, and the better of

horse races and cock matches by being in fee with the grooms and cock-keepers ; and, madam, I play as well at tennis, ombre, backgammon, trick-track, and crimp, as any man ; which is no small addition to my estate. I gave you these things in my particulars, if your ladyship please to remember.

Lady Cheat. But you cannot make a jointure of these things, and therefore I must consider a little longer.

Prig. With all my heart, madam ; but in the meantime let you and I play a set at trick-track ; and when the rest come in, we'll make a match at ombre.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Madam, there are some tenants wait without to speak with you.

Lady Cheat. You'll pardon me, I must go to them.

[*Exit LADY CHEATLY.*

Prig. Come on, Mr. Steward ; what say you to a game at backgammon ?

Stew. If you'll retire to my chamber, have at you.

Prig. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter THEODOSIA, ISABELLA, BELLAMOUR,
CARLOS, STANMORE.*

Car. Who's there ! the Lady Pleasant's Daughter, Theodosia ?

Bell. It is ; she's young and handsome, has a great deal of wit, and a very good fortune ; which makes her set up for marriage, and is impregnable to anything else.

Car. She's extreme pretty ; I loved her violently before I went into France, but now she's a thousand times more beautiful.

Stan. Ladies, your humble servant.

Bell. A gentleman, a friend of ours, lately come out of France. [*He salutes them.*

Car. And glad I am so, for all that nation could no show me so much beauty.

Theod. I see, sir, you have not been in France for nothing; you have imported French goods, I mean compliments; they are a nation full of complimenters.

Car. They are so, madam; and the tailor does it full as well as the gentleman; 'tis a road of speaking which all of 'em have: I was not dull enough to get it of 'em, nor would I bring so common a thing as a compliment to you, madam.

Theod. You can bring it to nobody that dislikes it more.

Car. Or needs it less.

Theod. Thus have I heard of a very rhetorical oration against eloquence.

Enter GARTRUDE.

Gart. O Lord! Mr. Stanmore here! [*Runs out.*]

Bell. Run, Stanmore; your business is more than half done; 'tis a certain sign, when a woman seeks corners, that she means some good by it.

Stan. I'll try that. [*Exit STANMORE.*]

Bell. I see my friend's caught again, for all his travel; I have a fellow-feeling of his case; let's retire, and give him opportunity.

Isab. With all my heart; opportunity is safe in the beginning of an amour, though it may be dangerous afterwards. [*They retire.*]

Theod. I hear never a French word from you, and that's strange; for all our sparks are so refined, they scarce speak a sentence without one; and though they seldom arrive at good French, yet they get enough to spoil their English.

Car. If a man means nothing, he cannot choose a better language; for it makes a pretty noise, without any manner of thought.

Theod. You have scarce brought one substantial vanity over with you: what have you learnt there?

none can show us so fine women. In France, they buy their beauty, and sell their love.

Theod. That fashion is coming up apace here.

Car. True beauty, madam, can no more be bought than true love: in me behold the one, while I admire the other in yourself.

Theod. How many French ladies have you said as much to?

Car. I went thither to be cured of love, not to make it.

Theod. What love?

Car. My love of you, which began so early in my heart, self-love was scarce before it. When your disdain could not remove it, I tried absence; but in vain too.

Theod. 'Tis impossible you could bring a heart unhurt from France.

Car. My love to you preserved me from all foreign invasion.

Theod. If you make love, you'll grow dull; it spoils a man of wit, as much as business.

Car. If love be predominant in conversation, I confess it; but a little relish of it does well.

Theod. The imitation of it may be borne, but the thing itself is a dead weight upon the mind; and a man can no more please under that disadvantage, than a horse can run a race with a pair of panniers on his back.

Car. And yet that horse may do it, if the match be well made.

Theod. I must have my servant all wit, all gaiety; and the ladies of the town must run mad for him: I would not only triumph over him, but over my whole sex in him.

Car. This is a hard doctrine, for a man of my sincerity and truth in love.

Theod. Make Isabella slight Bellamour, little Gartrude sacrifice Selfish; be the third word in every lady's mouth

from fifteen to five-and-thirty; and you shall find what I'll say to you.

Car. To attempt this were great vanity, and no less dishonesty to my friend Bellamour.

Theod. If you love, you'll think anything lawful: this must be done. I dare not trust my own judgment; I will have you in vogue ere I favour you in the least.

Car. Well, since these ladies are your outworks, I will on, and by the force of imagination make every one Theodosia; but if I fail, think on my constant love, which will not suffer me to use deceit.

Theod. Suppose I should answer you in your whining strain, and say my love were true as yours, my flame as great, and all your wishes mine?

Car. Then were Carlos the happiest man on earth.

Theod. No, then the game were up betwixt us, and there were no more to do but to pay the stakes, and then to something else.

Car. We might play set after set for ever.

Theod. No, one of us would be broke: go, get you about your task, I say.

[*Exeunt* CARLOS and THEODOSIA.]

Enter SELFISH and YOUNG MAGGOT.

Y. Mag. Did you see how the ladies flocked about me at Court, when I made a relation of the rehearsal, and afterwards when I read my song to 'em?

Sel. I think I am as well with the ladies there as any man, and they like my songs too. They say they're so easy, so genteel and well bred, and so pat to the women's understandings: the men say they're silly; but they are envious.

Y. Mag. I'll secure you, the Play takes; I have done the poet's business with the ladies, who, you know, govern the men, as the moon does the sea.

Sel. There is a pretty creature not past eighteen

upon her the figure of a procurer, and is to bring me a maidenhead anon, which fell in love with me at a Play.

Y. Mag. But I'll show you a song.

Sel. Of late I have had no leisure to make a song ; I am so overrun with new acquaintances.

Y. Mag. [*reads*]. "Damon, see how charming Chloris," &c. How do you like it ?

Sel. 'Tis soft and very much after my own way, and I like it well. But how like you this peruke ?

Y. Mag. 'Tis very proper.

Sel. I have five as good by me. I have a hundred pound I got at ombre—Mr. Whimsey owes me two hundred—I have a pad or two, and when I get this debt in I will buy a chariot and perhaps have as good equipage as any man if I can get a hundred pound Sir Nicholas Whachum owes me. I only want a couple of hunters for Windsor, and then——

Y. Mag. You don't mind my song ; 'tis to my mistress.

Sel. Yes ; but, as I was saying, now I am at ease in my fortune till next Michaelmas.

Y. Mag. But to go on.

Sel. I have lately got such a conquest over a lady, the prettiest creature—I snatched a rose from her soft bosom. She is of quality. All the town were mad after her, and she threw herself into my arms, and I am the happy man.

Y. Mag. Well, to be in love is the greatest pleasure in the world ; it makes one so sweetly melancholy and composed and so fit to write. Besides, it keeps one in shape.

Sel. I have not much occasion for love ; the ladies follow me and love me so I have no time for't. Why, I have had three maidenheads this week.

Y. Mag. I would not be without love and writing for all the world. I had a billet from the prettiest creature of sixteen to-day ; I'll tell you——

Enter CARLOS, BELLAMOUR, THEODOSIA, *and* ISABELLA.

Y. Mag. I have an amour.

Sel. I.

Y. Mag. I.

Sel. I.

Y. Mag. I.

Sel. This fellow is always talking of himself. One can't speak to him, but he is always at I, I. I wonder at the impertinence of such people.

Theod. These fools are always talking of themselves.

Isab. They are the worst things they can talk of.

Car. Or we either: therefore, madam, hear me on the last subject.

Theod. That's as bad.

Bell. He went a mile to put on that fair peruke for the sake of his complexion.

Theod. Prithee, Isabella, let's find fault with 'em both and break his heart.

Enter STANMORE *and* GARTRUDE.

Gart. Fie upon you, Mr. Stanmore; I'll ne'er come near you again if you use me so; you do nothing but kiss one, and ruffle one, and spoil one's things, that you do.

Stan. Why are you so pretty, then, to provoke a man beyond all patience?

Gart. Why, how do I provoke you? I have done nothing to anger you, have I?

Bell. What, are you fallen out with your mistress?

Stan. No; but since she's insensible of all I can speak to her, and yet so pretty, I cannot but love her; if words won't move her actions must.

Sel. Oh! here are the ladies. Now you shall see what advances they will make to me, but especially Gartrude, that pretty creature.

Y. Mag. This is a very conceited fellow, and would

Sel. Ladies, your most humble servant. Now you shall see, Maggot. Dear, pretty creature, let me kiss that nosegay. Well, 'tis a thousand times sweeter in that pretty bosom than in its own bed, though at the sun-rising, when the morning dew is in drops upon it. Sweet madam, let me kiss that hand that gathered it.

Gart. Oh, fine, what rare words are these! He uses me like a princess. Sir, 'tis more your goodness than my desert. Sister, this is a rare man; Mr. Stanmore is a wit, they say, but I don't understand him half so well; I always think they jeer one.

Isab. Indeed, 'tis a hard thing for wit to descend to your capacity.

Sel. I was with some ladies last night did so commend you and said you were the most delicate creature; they did me the favour to say your eyes were black and sparkling like mine, and your nose very much resembling mine, and that you have a pretty pouting about the mouth like me, and fine little blub-lips. I am very well with the ladies at Court, but I see none like you.

Stan. Do you know I love that lady?

Sel. If you do I pity you; she is otherwise engaged, to my knowledge.

Enter PRIG.

Prig. Come, 'faith, since we are all together let's go to ombre—two companies—and make an afternoon on't.

Y. Mag. I desire you will not interrupt me; I am singing the ladies a new song.

Prig. Song? Pish! is not gaming better than hearing of songs? Here's such a stir with these wits!

Isab. No; pray let's hear it.

[YOUNG MAGGOT *sings* "Damon," &c.]

Prig. I observe you wits are always making songs of the love of shepherds and shepherdesses, a company of blockheaded, clownish, ugly, tawny, sunburnt people;

Car. I see these fools need nobody to show 'em ; they show themselves well enough.

Prig. Methinks that old song is very pretty—"My mistress is a tennis-ball," &c.

Y. Mag. This rogue has nothing but tennis-courts and bowling-greens in his head.

Bell. Prithee, Prig, sing one of your own making.

Prig. With all my heart.

Enter LADY CHEATLY.

Lady Cheat. Mistress Theodosia, your humble servant. Gentlemen, I hope you'll pardon me ; I could not neglect business. I think one had better be poor than be troubled with money thus. But if you please to walk in, there's a small banquet waits and fiddles to dance, if you please.

Isab. Pray, madam, let's hear Mr. Prig's song first ; 'tis his own.

Prig. I am glad your ladyship is come to hear it. [*Sings.*

Hey ho, hey ho,
The merry horn does blow ;
'Tis broad day,
Come away :
Twivee, twivee, twivee, hey !
Do not stay.
Then have at the hare,
Let old puss beware.
Twivee, twivee, twivee, ho !
The merry horn does blow ;
Come away.

Y. Mag. What a happy thing 'tis to have wit !

Prig. Hang wit, give me mirth. This is a catch that I made ; and my Lord Squander and I always roar it out after a fox-chase. Pox, I hate your swains and your nymphs.

Seb. Do they wear breeches thus cut in France ?

Car. Yes, sir

must have some new clothes made immediately in this fashion ; I cannot rest till I bespeak 'em.

Isab. Pray, madam, join with us ; we shall have very good sport. Are you well, Mr. Selfish ? Sure you are not ; I never saw you look so ill before.

Theod. He looks extreme ill ; your complexion seems to have too much of the olive in it to-day.

Sel. Pardon me, ladies ; I think my complexion is well enough, or my glass is false ; I never looked clearer.

Car. That trimming, too, with your favour, is very disagreeable, and does not cohere with your complexion at all.

Sel. I assure you, sir, all the ladies I saw to-day are of another opinion ; they said my complexion was much like pretty Mistress Gartrude's here.

Lady Cheat. Methinks you look mighty lean and thin ; I fear you are going into a consumption, sir.

Sel. Oh, no, madam ! I am very plump ; I am only afraid of being too gross, and bellying ; I am very fat, I assure your ladyship ; pray feel my ribs, madam.

Prig. They laugh at him. The devil take me, I never saw a fellow so altered in my life ; thou canst not live long, thou smellest of earth—foh !

Sel. You mistake. I am one of the vigourest fellows, the strongest bodies in England ; I was taken for Mr. Carlos to-day, at a little distance.

Bell. Prithee, Selfish, do not play the fool with thyself ; get a physician ; I never saw your complexion so sallow ; thou look'st prodigiously ill.

Sel. Good sir, I know what I am ; my cheeks are as plump and my complexion as fresh as any here ; my eyes and mouth as cheerful, and everything.

Car. Nothing will mortify the rogue ; he thinks so well of Selfish, that he thinks Selfish can never look ill, nor be ill : I believe he thinks Selfish can never die.

Sel. I have a face that will not alter ; if I were a dying, 'twould look well ; indeed, my complexion changes sometimes, but never looks ill, I assure you.

Gart. I wonder you should be so mistaken all ; methinks he looks very neatly.

Bell. This is a damned peruke ; why did you put it on to-day ?

Car. But indeed that suit is an odious thing, and the trimming the worst I ever saw ; 'tis your tailor's fancy ; it becomes you very ill.

Sel. Methinks it is very pretty ; I think they are all out of their wits.

Lady Cheat. 'Tis enough ; we shall make the man hang himself.

Y. Mag. Do you think I'll suffer you for ever to cross me with your damned insipid songs ? Let me tell you, it is a grand impertinence.

Prig. Gad, I do not know what you mean by your gibberish ; but I suppose you call me impertinent, and therefore I'll be beforehand with you—you are a son of a whore.

[Gives YOUNG MAGGOT a box on the ear. They draw, the ladies run out shrieking.]

Sel. I will wait upon the ladies.

Bell. Hold, hold !

Car. Let 'em alone ; if you offer to part 'em they'll hurt one another.

Y. Mag. I'll not be brutal ; you shall answer for it. Sir, you are lately come out of France, and cannot deny a man of honour your assistance.

Prig. Prithee, Stanmore, be my second ; I'll wit him, with a pox to him.

Y. Mag. To-morrow morning ; done.

Prig. Let my second appoint the place.

Y. Mag. With all my heart ; Monsieur Carlos, agree with him.

Stan. Come, let's in, and put it off to the ladies as if you were friends.

Prig. Ay, with all my heart ; what care I ?



ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Enter LADY CHEATLY, CARLOS, BELLAMOUR, STANMORE, ISABELLA, THEODOSIA, GARTRUDE, LADY BUSY, YOUNG MAGGOT, SELFISH, PRIG, MAGGOT, and LUMP.



LUMP. Lady sister, I am much offended to see you take this course of vanity ; would any wise woman make use of fiddlers, minstrels and singers ? I am very much ashamed of it ; it is folly, great folly, not becoming the blood of the Lumps.

Isab. Let's withdraw ; we shall have a lesson from this formal uncle.

Gart. I can't abide him.

[*Exeunt all but* Lady CHEATLY, LUMP, PRIG and MAGGOT.]

Lump. What pleasure can there be to hear fellows scrape upon cats'-guts ? There is nothing in't.

Lady Cheat. 'Tis the way to get credit, at our end of the town ; as singing psalms and praying loud in a fore-room is at yours.

Lump. You talk not wisely ; do not several godly men, by those means and by frequenting meetings, get credit enough to break for a hundred thousand pounds, and are made by it for ever ?

is a mighty sober, solid fellow, and a rare man at business, and loves business mightily.

Lump. And for the wits that come hither, I doubt not but these gentlemen are of my opinion; I say, they are dangerous, scandalous, and good for nothing.

Mag. 'Tis true, madam, they are a company of flashy, frothy fellows, and have no solidity in them.

Lady Cheat. I find these coxcombs mistake dulness for solidity. [*Aside.*

Prig. They talk of wit, and this and that, and keep a coil and a pother about wit; there's nothing at all in't; what a pox is't good for? I would not give a farthing for wit. Here's Young Maggot and Selfish; why, they don't know how to bet at a horserace, or make a good match at tennis, and are cross-bitten at bowls; hang wit!

Mag. Wit is one of the grievances of the nation.

Lump. It is, as this gentleman has wisely observed, a grievance, a sore grievance, and I would have an Act of Parliament against it.

Mag. Let me take a wit at business, see how I'll handle him; I would not be a wit for all the world.

Prig. Nor I neither, I hate it; they are a company of fleering, jeering, ill-natured fellows to boot, too.

Lady Cheat. Be comforted, gentlemen, you are in no danger.

Lump. I say they are in danger, and you too, of catching it, if you suffer them to come amongst ye. I have known solid men, by keeping that base company, become witty, and have ruined themselves. For my own part, I would as soon catch the plague as that disease of wit.

Lady Cheat. Oh, brother! you have a strong antidote against it.

Lump. Thanks be to Heaven, I hate wits! out upon 'em! they write satires upon good men, and will laugh at wise men.

Lady Cheat. Why truly, brother, sometimes wise men

Enter Steward.

Stew. Here is your scrivener, Mr. Lump, and several others met upon money business.

Lump. I ordered mine to come to you ; I have four thousand pounds paid in this day, which you may use. I will leave my scrivener to take your assignments, either of bonds, judgments, or mortgages, as it shall happen to be disposed of by you.

Lady Cheat. But will the scrivener be true, and publish it to be my money ?

Lump. I warrant you, he's a godly man, and you may trust him. He has contributed more to your fame than any one. I myself have brought in Ananias, and he will send money to you, to put out for him. 'Tis near four, I must be gone ; though haste does not become a wise man, yet at present I have some upon me.

Lady Cheat. The haste of a fool is the slowest thing in the world.

Lump. It is my hour of walking.

Lady Cheat. Will you not stay and take the assignments ?

Lump. I will not break my method for the world. I have these twenty years walked through Turnstile Alley to Holborn Fields at four. All the good women observe me, and set their bread into the oven by me, and by no other clock. When I go by I hear 'em call, "Carry the bread to the oven, the old gentleman is going by." I do love to be taken notice of for my method. Farewell. [Exit LUMP.]

Lady Cheat. Let's into the garden. [Exeunt omnes.]

Enter BELLAMOUR and ISABELLA.

Bell. By Heaven, I love thee more than light or liberty, joy of my heart !

Isab. Such hearts as yours are seldom near their mouths.

Bell. A kiss of this fair hand will bring mine thither ;

Isab. Raptures in love have no more meaning in 'em than rants in poetry, mere fustian; 'tis the stum^r of love that makes it fret and fume and fly, and never good.

Bell. Can a young lady in so warm an age be insensible of love?

Isab. A virtuous woman is ever insensible to such a love as is unfit for her; but you sparks, like wolves, after many battles, by often preying upon carcasses, come at last to venture upon the living. Modest or not, 'tis all one to you, you are so well fleshed.

Bell. Not so, madam; I know my duty and your worth; and would time stand still, I could be content to gaze upon that face, and not tempt you; but our love is frail, and we must take our pleasures while we may.

Isab. I must consider, while I may, and on the shore think on the ruins of a shipwrecked fame.

Bell. We shall never reach Love's Indies, if we fear tempests already.

Isab. Think not to conquer me by dint of simile. I'll never venture the pain and peril of such a bold voyage.

Bell. As tender barks make it daily, and return home richly fraught; keep coaches, and live splendidly the rest of their lives.

Isab. Infamously rather.

Bell. I know not that; but they have their days of visiting, play at ombre, make treats as high and as often as the persons of quality, wear as good clothes, and want no fashionable folly that woman's heart can wish for; and of all such my Isabella shall ride admiral.

Isab. Can you pretend to love, and tempt me from my honour? Coaches and clothes! so rogues will rob to live like gentlemen.

Bell. 'Tis no dishonour; custom has made it otherwise.

Isab. When a man of honour can turn coward, you may prevail on me ; the case is equal.

Bell. On the contrary, kindness in women is like courage in men.

Isab. Did not the general licence of the time excuse you, I ne'er would see you more.

Bell. What ! will nothing down, but "to have and to hold" ? I'll marry nobody else ; and when my inclination dies, leave you its wealthy widow ; you may marry after it.

Isab. I'll bring no infamy where I bring my person.

Bell. This coldness inflames me more. Consent to my desires, and none of all the ladies shall outshine, no equipage exceed yours.

Isab. And I the while shall be but a part of your equipage, to be kept. . What is it but to wear your livery and take board wages ?

Bell. I love you well enough to marry you ; but dare not put myself into your hands, knowing what a jade I am at a long journey.

Isab. If you ever loved you can never hate ; and I can be content, where I have had the best, to keep the rest ; and if you love me less shall lay the fault on Nature, not on you.

Bell. It goes more against a man's heart to fall in his love than his expense ; and they that do either most commonly remove for it. There is no enduring it in the same place. Think on my love, my fortune shall be yours.

Isab. I scorn a fortune with the ruin of my honour.

Bell. It is but herding with another sort of people, leaving the melancholy hypocrites for the gay, cheerful sinners, the envious for the envied.

Isab. These tales may catch unheeded, silly creatures, whom Nature half debauches to your hands ; but for

heard all your discourse. The gentleman is a fine gentleman, and his proposals are as reasonable as any lady can wish for. Every man cannot bring himself to marry, and yet may love better and longer than those that do.

Bell. Right, madam. This is an unexpected assistance.

Lady Busy. There's Mr. Maggot kept Mrs. Wagtail, after the whole town had done with her, and loves her very well still. Nay, some have not grudged to spend ten thousand pounds upon a mistress, though they have starved their wives and children.

Isab. Have you fee'd this lady to plead for you, or is it the baseness of her own nature?

Lady Busy. Is my charity thus rewarded, my honour questioned? I, that am companion to the ladies of the best quality? The jealouslest lord thinks his lady safe in my company. My honour is dearer to me than all the world; and but for endeavouring to have you well settled in the world, as I have my daughters, do I deserve this?

Isab. She is as silly as she is naught. When you see me next bring nobler thoughts and better purposes. And so farewell. [*Exit* ISABELLA.

Bell. What a devil shall I do? She's virtuous and fit enough for a wife. Ounds! how that word makes me start! But all this may be a copy of her countenance. There may be huffs in virtue as well as courage.

Lady Busy. I hope, sir, you'll not conceive amiss for what she says.

Bell. No, madam. Pox on this bawd! I love the treason, but I hate the traitor. [*Exit* BELLAMOUR.

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. Your humble servant, madam. Has your lady

Lady Busy. I have, sir. I see her coming. Retire, and let me alone. Come, pretty Mrs. Gatty.

[*Exit* STANMORE.]

Enter GARTRUDE.

Gart. Your servant, madam.

Lady Busy. Thou art a pretty creature. Ah! 'twould do a man good to lie by such flesh and blood as thou art. All the matter is to choose a good bedfellow, and for that trust me. There is the prettiest man, and the finest gentleman not far off——

Gart. Ay, so there is really. Mr. Selfish is the finest person, so civil and well bred, and is very ingenious, too. I vow 'twould do one good to have such a bedfellow.

Lady Busy. You are out; 'tis Mr. Stanmore is the man, and will make a good settlement, go to, which the other cannot.

Gart. He is a fine gentleman indeed, but really I don't care for a wit, I do not know what to say before 'em; but I can talk with Mr. Selfish all the day long. Oh! he does tell such pretty stories of himself! he is a very fair-spoken man, and I'll swear he is the purest company for a lady that ever was, and so handsome.

Lady Busy. Not comparable to Stanmore.

Gart. O Gemini! that your ladyship should say so!

Lady Busy. I have experience in the world, I know what I say; your lady mother has desired me to take care to put you into the world. Youth is indiscreet and unwary; trust us, and 'twill be your own another day. I say, Mr. Stanmore will settle ten times more upon you than the other is worth.

Gart. But really, madam, I must confess I don't love a wit; they say they are not good-natured, and they don't admire one half so much as others do neither.

will), and you have a way to be too hard for the best of 'em, for all their wits.

Enter SELFISH.

Gart. O Lord, here he is! I wonder you should say Mr. Stanmore is as handsome as he; well, he's a lovely man.

Sel. Ladies, I kiss both your hands; methinks I see the freshness of the spring in one, and the fruitfulness of the autumn in the other.

Gart. O rare, what a saying that is, and so like a gentleman!

Enter STANMORE.

Stan. Now 'tis time to speak for myself; she is very pretty; but why should I love a fool, that loves a fool? I see, I am a devilish carnal fellow, and mind nothing but the body.

Lady Busy. I'll steal out to my lady, and leave you; we have business of consequence. [*Exit LADY BUSY.*]

Stan. Madam, your humble servant.

Sel. Mr. Stanmore, your servant; were you not at the audience this afternoon?

Stan. No, sir.

Sel. Indeed I have committed a great fault, to wait upon these ladies, when the Court was to appear in all the splendour it could be, with all the well dressed and well bred men about it, and I was not there; I wish it be not taken ill.

Stan. O vanity, vanity!

Sel. I know I was missed, and asked for there; but I can mind nothing when ladies are in the way, especially such pretty creatures as Mistress Gatty.

Gart. You are pleased to say so.

Stan. Well, my dear little one, I am resolved to be revenged upon this beauty of yours, for making me so mad in love with you.

Stan. I'll have no mercy on't, I'll never spare it. 'Faith, you shan't think to make me in love with you for nothing.

Sel. I shall have a new suit come home to-morrow morning, in Mr. Carlos's fashion; but, I assure you, 'tis something better fancied, both for the colour and the garniture.

Gart. Really, sir, methinks Mr. Selfish is the prettiest modish person, and so genteel, is not he?

Stan. S'heart, what an entertainment is this to me! that I should love such a thing!—Don't mistake him, he is an ass, I assure you.

Gart. O Lord, that you should say so now! he does everything so like a gentleman, as my Lady Busy says, and is so well bred.

Stan. Well bred? hang him, he is a finical clown, he has not breeding enough for a valet de chambre.

Gart. What a strange man are you! Well, you wits never speak well of one another, I vow.

Stan. Ounds, what a pretty fool she is! but I am vigorous still; her folly cannot thrust me off, so much as her beauty pulls me to.

Sel. I am going to buy me a pretty convenient coach; what colour do you fancy, my dear mistress Gatty? I think purple will suit best with my complexion.

Gart. O yes; purple will be very pretty.

Sel. Nay, I'll say that for myself, my fancy always pleases the ladies. Pretty miss, let me see that delicate busk; I will write a distich upon it, and present it to you.

Gart. Pray do.

Sel. Let me kiss that happy busk, that goes so near your lovely body; and that, delicate, sweet, white, soft hand, that gave it me.

Gart. Well, he's a rare man, and is so full of fine courtship!

Stan. Do you know that I will not suffer you to smile, and cringe, and play the monkey here?

Sel. I cannot help it ; if ladies will love me, and be affected with my passion, what is it to me ?

Stan. Get you gone, you coxcomb ; I'll endure it no longer. *[He fillips him and pulls off his peruke.*

Gart. Nay ! what have you done to poor Mr. Selfish ?

Sel. I wonder you should have no more breeding ; one would have thought I might have taught you more in this time.

Gart. Pray let me help you ; I'll set it right again.

Stan. Death and damnation ! what's this ?

Sel. The devil take me, if I could not find in my heart to ruffle your cravat, before the lady, for this outrage of yours.

Stan. Do you hear, sir ? begone, and leave us, or by Heaven I will cut your throat.

Sel. Well, I cannot be ill bred, though you can ; and therefore I take my leave. *[Exit SELFISH.*

Gart. Nay, look you now, udds fiddles, what have you done ? you have made Mr. Selfish go away. I'll follow him, that I will.

Enter LADY CHEATLY and MAGGOT.

Lady Cheat. Do you hear, minx ? be civiller, than I hear you are, to Mr. Stanmore ; and know, I'll turn you out of my house, if you think on Selfish. Sir, your servant.

Gart. O lack ! what does she say ?

Stan. Nay, I'll follow you.

[Exeunt GARTRUDE and STANMORE.

Mag. Catch her, man ; she'll be a vast fortune ; my lady wallows in money, she knows not what to do with it. But, good madam, let me humbly petition you to consider my passion, and have some regard to my estate, which is a plentiful one. And then, madam, for business, you see a proof ; did you ever see a man tell money better than I do ? I do all the ladies' business hereabouts and great persons &c

estate into some order, before I think of disposing of my person.

Mag. If any man solicits your business like me— Try me, madam: I do everything for the ladies.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Madam, I have private business for your ladyship's ear.

Mag. Your servant, madam; I will retire; be pleased to consider me. *[Exit MAGGOT.]*

Stew. My business concerns your ladyship and myself so nearly, that you must pardon me if I urge it home.

Lady Cheat. What means he. *[Aside.]*

Stew. That I have served you faithfully, yourself can witness.

Lady Cheat. I can, and I'll reward you largely.

Stew. 'Tis that I ask. Think, madam, I have in your service lost my honesty, laid by my conscience, and while I contribute to your fraud on others, I must not be deceived myself.

Lady Cheat. What will he drive at? *[aside].* I am sorry you ask for what I intended to give you; I did resolve to give you a thousand pound.

Stew. Do not I know that all the bonds you have given to people, assignments and declarations of trust to your brother, are written with the ink I bought of a great artist, and that within a month it will wear out, and nothing will remain but blanks?

Lady Cheat. What then? my husband was cheated of his estate by his brother and other rascals, and 'tis fit I should take letters of reprisal.

Stew. No doubt. Your bonds you have taken from others are written with ink I had of the same man, which (rubbed over with a spirit) makes impressions into many sheets, so that you have many bonds for one; the sums are easily altered.

Stew. A thousand pound ! I scorn it : I aim at higher things ; I am a gentleman by birth, your equal.

Lady Cheat. Heaven and earth ! What have I brought myself to ? When my estate is out of dispute, I will increase your reward.

Stew. No, madam ; I have long honoured and loved your ladyship, and nothing less than your person can ever satisfy me.

Lady Cheat. How, sir !

Stew. Hold, madam ; if you use me roughly I in a moment will blast all your fortunes, and you shall fly from hence as naked as you came ; but if you'll marry me, I'll be as humble a servant as I have been before.

Lady Cheat. Insolent villain ! [*Aside.*] Sure thou art not in earnest ? [*To him.*]

Stew. By Heaven, I am ; and I wil perish or attain my ends.

Lady Cheat. He may undo me ! Oh, that I should lay my plots so shallow ! I must have a trick for the rogue. [*Aside.*] Give me time to consider of it.

Stew. I can give none, nor will.

Lady Cheat. Marriage would stop my business, and I shall get no more money of my brother, or others.

Stew. We'll keep it private.

Lady Cheat. Though modesty would not let me propose it to you, and I would rather have died than done it, I must confess the thing I wished for upon earth.

Stew. Then I am happy, and will serve you till my death.

Lady Cheat. Forgive this frailty, and use me well. Shame and blushes will confound me.

Stew. Dear madam ! there's no shame in love and marriage. I see she loves me ! [*Aside.*]

Lady Cheat. There yet remains one difficulty ; you are my main witness, and (when we are married) you can be none ; therefore if you will go to a Master in Chancery,

false estate, the next hour shall make you master of me and mine.

Stew. Ha! I may be caught, and after I have sworn to that, I have no hank upon her. [*Aside.*] Before, madam, I never will; but after, for my own sake, I must. I'll get a parson whom I can trust, and none shall know of the marriage but himself.

Lady Cheat. This will not do, I must have another trick for the rascal. [*Aside.*] You have convinced me; but I am engaged to a parson already, whom I promised that office to; I'll send for him presently.

Stew. I am transported with my happiness!

Lady Cheat. Withdraw, sir; I'll come to you instantly.
[*Exit Steward.*]

Enter PRIG.

Ha! this fellow shall be my engine, and I must lose no time. I am glad you are come; I have a business to communicate to you, that concerns you nearly, in which you must be secret.

Prig. Does it concern my honour? Madam, I'll cut their throats.

Lady Cheat. No, sir; it concerns your love.

Prig. Then I'll cut their throats too.

Lady Cheat. No, it is not come to that; but just as I was resolved (having considered your passion) to bestow myself upon you——

Prig. Oh, dear madam! let me kiss your fair hand.

Lady Cheat. Would you believe it? this villainous Steward having writings in his hands for the greatest part of my estate, is arrived to that insolence, he threatens to burn 'em unless I will instantly marry him.

Prig. O dog! rogue! your servant, madam; I'll cut his throat immediately.

Lady Cheat. Hold, sir; he's an odd humorous fellow, and will not have his throat cut.

Prig. Will he not? I'll cut his throat.

false marriage upon him, and you shall be my chaplain. You can get the habit of a parson?

Prig. Ay, ay; this is very pretty! I your chaplain? ha, ha! if my face would but look solid enough for a divine.

Lady Cheat. I warrant you; 'tis a very judicious face, and will be very parsonical.

Prig. Not so, a gamester's at your service.

Lady Cheat. And you can read the Common Prayer? That's material; for some gentlemen can scarce read nowadays.

Prig. I warrant you, madam. This will be the prettiest trick.

Lady Cheat. When you have married him and me, about an hour hence (nobody else being by) I'll take care to pack him far enough afterwards, and thus reserve myself for you. Get a habit quickly, and lay it in the closet; here's the key, there you shall shift; I must be gone. [*Exit* Lady CHEATLY.

Prig. O happy man! I shall never need to sneak after a lord, to sing catches, break jests, to eat and rook with him. Well, I'll go no more to twelve, that's certain; I'll get me a pack of fox-dogs, hunt every day, and play at the Groom-Porter's at night. [*Exit* PRIG.

Enter THEODOSIA and ISABELLA in the Garden.

Theod. Dear Isabella, how I love these solitary walks, free from the noise and importunity of men!

Isab. So much the contrary, that should you hear the rattling of a coach, you'd be ready to leap over the wall.

Theod. If it were Bellamour's.

Isab. Why Bellamour's? No, though you knew it to be a tired hackney, with six dusty passengers in't; thou art the giddiest creature!

Theod. I do not love to be solid as you are, and fix upon one man: 'tis better to like all, and love none.

Theod. No, never think so. Do but hear the men talk to one another, and 'tis antidote enough against 'em ; they are as malicious as we women, and would quarrel as often, if it were not for fear of fighting.

Isab. Of all men, I wonder Stanmore 'scapes it ; he speaks well of no man.

Theod. 'Tis fit to speak ill of fops, who were left to the world, if men of wit might not show 'em.

Isab. For aught I see, laughing at them does them no hurt ; for they rise and get fortunes for all that. Fools are lawful prize ; but Stanmore speaks ill of witty men.

Theod. When the witty men fall upon one another, they make sport for the fools ; and so laughing goes round, no matter how.

Isab. Stanmore says Carlos has an ill breath, and takes physic of a French surgeon ; and that Bellamour keeps a player, and will run out his estate.

Theod. And yet you see how dear they are one to another when they meet ; 'tis the fashion.

Enter GARTRUDE.

Gart. O sister, come hither ! here are four men measuring of swords, I believe they are going to fight in the next field. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CARLOS, PRIG, STANMORE, and Young MAGGOT, as in the field.

Y. Mag. How shall I kill this Prig ? he wants two of his vital parts, a brain and a heart.

Prig. I'll spoil your writing ; have at your madrigal arm, you wit you !

[PRIG *disarms* Young MAGGOT, and comes up to CARLOS.

Stan. Carlos, you see our advantage.

Car. And scorn it ; have at you first. [*He disarms*

Stan. We are friends ; I love thee ; prithee let it alone.

Car. Not so great friends ; I overheard you speaking ill of me to my mistress.

Stan. Prithee, Carlos, that's nothing ; we all speak ill of one another, and it goes for nothing.

Car. I am not of your opinion ; have at you.

[CARLOS *disarms* STANMORE.]

Stan. At you?—well, you have it, and I am glad I had to do with a brave man.

Car. You are men of honour, and may be trusted with your swords. Let's in amongst the ladies, as if nothing had passed between us.

Prig. You may do what you will ; but the valiant Prig desires his widow may hear of his prowess at least.

Y. Mag. That I should be worsted by an ass !

[*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter the Ladies.

Gart. I am afraid Carlos has hurt honest Mr. Stanmore ; but Carlos is a fine gentleman, and fights so like a gentleman. He said the prettiest things to me in an arbour, Mr. Selfish could not have courted me at a higher rate ; I vow, I begin to like him strangely ; I like a wit better than I did.

Isab. Thou'lt like anybody.

Theod. Pray Heaven Carlos be not hurt !

Isab. You seem disordered.

Theod. No, no ; what makest thou think so ?

Isab. I am confident Carlos is not hurt.

Theod. I think not of him.

Isab. I cannot blame you : I believe he has honesty to his wit, and honour to his courage ; I never saw a finer gentleman.

Gart. He has almost as taking a way with him as Mr. Selfish.

Theod. I don't like his face, 'tis too serious ; his mien

Isab. You are too nice ; his looks and mien are manly, and he dances like a person of quality. You are for a page's face and a dancing-master's legs ; and I hate both.

Theod. Nay, never let's fall out about him.

Isab. If we should he's here to part us.

Enter CARLOS, PRIG, and YOUNG MAGGOT.

Theod. He goes on faster with his task than I'd have him.

Y. Mag. There is no living two hours out of the beau monde ; I am, out of the ladies' company, like a fish out of the water. Is not that well said, Prig ?

Prig. Not at all, the devil take me.

Theod. Not so mute as a fish I hope ?

Y. Mag. No ; we witty men are always talking, now and then two or three of us at a time, invention does so flow. But I had rather say one fine thing to a lady, than twenty to the best wits in town.

Prig. Say fine things ! What a pox, don't we all speak alike ? Don't we all speak English ?

Theod. Had you never a mistress that was a fool ?

Y. Mag. None are so gross, but they guess when a man says a witty thing, when I say it, I am sure.

Prig. Pox on saying ! I love doing a witty thing ; to win a man's money is to outwit him, I think : and I'll undertake to win yours at ten several games.

Y. Mag. What, cheat me ?

Prig. No, upon the square, by mere judgment. A wit is like a running horse, good for no earthly thing beside. When did you ever know any of 'em well with a great man, or so much as taken down to a lord's house a-buck-hunting ? They can drink, some of 'em ; but then they talk of philosophy, history, poetry, as if they came into company to study ; this is stuff the devil would not hear.

Prig. Why, dogs, hawks and horses, crimp, trick-track, and primero ; make me a match at bowls or tennis over a bottle. Come, even or odd for two pieces ; I hate to be idle.

Isab. What an intolerable fool this is !

Prig. There are three matches to be run at New-market ; I'll bet money on every one of 'em ; I'll hold you six to four of the gelding against the mare ; gold to silver on the bay Stone-horse against the Flea-bitten ; and an even fifty pound, or what you will——

Y. Mag. You need not run yourself out of breath ; I will never bet while I live.

Prig. Ladies, what think you of five merry guineas ? will either of you bet ?

Theod. I do not like Carlos talking so long with that fool ; she is young and handsome ; she has beauty enough to invite, and folly enough to grant.

Prig. I'll hold five pound I make a tennis-ball lie upon that stand, once in thrice.

Isab. This fellow has no genius but to play, nor no argument but a wager.

Y. Mag. One that wants wit deserves not to bear the figure of a man.

Theod. Such fellows are but ciphers to you men of wit ; they make you of greater value.

Y. Mag. I'll swear that's well said ; I don't think I could have said better myself.

Prig. What will you give me for this ring at the day of marriage ?

Car. You are so pretty, and so obliging, there's no resisting both. But will you come and see my lodgings ? I have the finest French things. [To GARTRUDE.]

Gart. Really, sir, you are so courteous and well behaved, I cannot deny you coming ; you put me so in mind of Mr. Selfish, you have his way with you to a hair. Do you write too ? He is a very pretty poet.

stomach. Selfish steals all he writes out of French poetry; he has neither wit nor money, but what he borrows. Forget him, and I'll be your servant.

Gart. You shall promise to be very civil, when I come.

Car. She is very easy, pray Heaven she be sound. I'll promise anything. Well, Theodosia, if I be false, 'tis your command has pushed me into temptation.

[*Aside.*

Prig. Come, here's ten guineas. I'll lay 'em upon my toe, and in six times kick 'em all into my mouth.

Isab. And what if you do?

Prig. Talk of wit! I'll play at prick-penny for twenty pound, with any one here.

Car. I am for you at tennis.

Prig. I'll give you a bisk at Long's, for ten pound.

Theod. Bowling, methinks, is better.

Prig. I'll give him one in seven, for fifty pound.

Car. We had better reserve our strength; I'll hunt to-morrow.

Prig. With all my heart; hollo, hey Ringwood, Rockwood, Fowler, hey! Well, I'll go and play in the meantime—Pox! this is the basest company, there's no money stirring. [*Exit PRIG.*

Theod. What could you do with that fool all this while?

Car. In obedience to your command, I suffered her impertinence. You are a very tyrant; your beauty obliges me to love none but you, and yet you'll have me make love to all; flesh and blood is not able to bear it.

Theod. Not so: I would have you gain their esteem, and be cried up among 'em: using us scurvily, often does that. Women love the careless, insolent, and loud.

Car. 'Faith, madam, I am a moral man; I do as I would be done by.

Theod. I would not be in love with you for a million; 'twould tempt you horribly.

Car. It would tempt me to vanity, but never to ingratitude.

Theod. Vanity and ingratitude are as inseparable as old age and ugliness; they that think too well of themselves ever think too ill of others; and I will give you no temptation of any kind.

Car. You are nothing but temptation; your face, your shape, your voice, nay, your very coldness, is a tempter; and therefore have a care on't.

Isab. You have met with the greatest tyrant of our sex.

Car. The greatest conqueror; but she has too much goodness for a tyrant. However, I'll tire her cruelty with my patience, and I'll hold her the greatest wager in the world, that I get her heart at last.

Theod. You have a pretty confidence; pray what's your wager?

Car. A wedding-night.

Theod. Who shall be judge?

Car. Your friend here.

Theod. I can't have a better. Done!

Car. Done, madam. I am sure good service and perseverance will gain a reasonable woman, where there is not a downright antipathy; and I am resolved never to give you over.

Theod. Love in this age is as well counterfeited as complexion; what with the men's lying and swearing, and the women's waters and washes, we know not what to make of one another.

Car. Try me with commands.

Theod. I must have you poetical, that's a great sign of love in a man of wit; I must have songs and sonnets plenty.

Car. Very well.

Theod. I must never have you see a play but when I am there.

Car. That is, I must see none at all, for when you

Theod. Then upon no pretence whatsoever must you go behind the scenes.

Car. That's grown the sign of a fop, and for my own sake I'll avoid it.

Theod. But the women have beauty and wit enough to hearken to a keeper.

Car. Some of them are so far from having wit of their own that they spoil that little the poets put into them by base utterance ; and for beauty, they lay it on so that 'tis much alike from fifteen to five-and-forty.

Theod. Item, you must not talk with vizors in the pit, though they look never so like women of quality, and are never so coming.^r

Car. Be it so : I never knew any good come of that way of fooling yet, for if they were afraid of me, I was ever more afraid of them. But how shall I arrive at the general fame and reputation you spoke of, with these restraints ? The men in vogue forbear none of all these things ; they dive like ducks at one end of the pit, and rise at the other ; then whisk into the whore-boxes, then into the scenes, and always hurry up and down ; the devils in an opera are not so busy.

Theod. You must take other courses.

Car. I have bespoken a Play for you, and all the good company of this house ; when the other is done, I hope, madam, you will honour it with your presence.

Theod. I'll do as the rest do.

Isab. This is a new piece of gallantry, Theodosia.

Theod. The invitation's general.

Gar. How mad would they be if they knew this were meant to me !

Enter MAGGOT, unseen by the rest.

Y. Mag. Now, pretty Mistress Gartrude, and the rest of the good company, I have the poem about me which I told you I writ upon beauty ; 'tis elaborate ; I kept my

chamber about it as long as a spark does of a clap, or a lady of a child ; I purged, and bled, and entered into a diet about it, and that made me have so clear a complexion, and write so well, and brought down my belly too.

Mag. How now, wit ! let me see that damn'd poem you lay-in of so long, when you should have studied the law.

Y. Mag. O Heaven ! I am undone.

Mag. I shall spoil that month's work.

Y. Mag. Ladies, pray intercede for me, and save my poem.

Theod. Hold, sir ! reprieve it.

Y. Mag. 'Tis not mine ; 'tis a friend's of mine.

Mag. Ah, graceless fool ! the worst friend thou hast, thyself thou meanest.

Y. Mag. Save this, and I will never be witty again.

Mag. No, sir. There, there : so, 'tis done. [*He tears it, and scatters it.*] By Heaven, touch a piece on't, and I'll disinherit you.

[*Young MAGGOT goes to gather up the pieces.*]

Car. Let me intercede for him : he'll mend, and be less witty every day.

Y. Mag. Forgive me once, and I'll mend, and be as dull as an old fat alderman, that sleeps over justice at the Old Bailey.

Mag. At your similes again ! Oh, you incorrigible wit ! let me see what poetry you have about you.

Y. Mag. Ladies, for Heaven's sake plead for me, or I am utterly ruined. Sir, will you disgrace me before my Mistress Gartrude ?

Mag. Hang you, coxcomb ! She hates wit, because she's a fool ; as I do, because I am wise. Stand still.

[*He pulls out bundles of papers.*]

Y. Mag. Mercy upon me, what will become of me ?

Isab. Good Mr. Maggot, be more merciful.

Ladies' Delight," a second, "The Flower of Love's Constancy," "An Answer to it," "Distiches to write upon Ladies' Busks," "Epigram written in a Lady's Bible in Covent Garden Church." Oh, wicked wit! "Posies for Wedding-rings." O idle rake-hell! I shall have you come to write to tobacco-boxes, and sword-blades, and knives, and to all the iron-work at Sheffield, all these go to it.

Y. Mag. Hold, good sir, hold! upon my knees I beg you'd hold. Here, cut off this joint, this, this; any joint about me, so you'll spare my poetry.

Theod. Have pity on the poor gentleman.

Gar. Oh, pray give me those upon the busks.

Mag. Not one shall live to make him infamous. Must you needs be a wit, to the dishonour of your family, and the disturbance of your good old father's ashes? I never knew one of our family a wit before. I'll alter my will instantly. [Exit MAGGOT.

Y. Mag. Nay, now you may hang me an you will, now you have torn my poetry: I have never a copy of any of 'em. I will go and hide myself in a hole, and never show my head again. [Exit YOUNG MAGGOT.

Car. Come, ladies, shall we prepare for the Play after this farce?

Isab. With all our hearts.





ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*The Playhouse.*

Enter CARLOS, THEODOSIA, PRIG, LADY CHEATLY, MAGGOT, LADY BUSY, BELLAMOUR, ISABELLA, STANMORE, GARTRUDE, YOUNG MAGGOT, *and* SELFISH, *and others coming into the Playhouse, seating themselves.*



ISAB. By being masqued, I shall observe Bellamour's actions.

Gart. Now nobody will know me; they'll take me for you in this petticoat.

Isab. If you hold your tongue, sister, but that makes a great difference betwixt us.

Gart. Ay, but I'll whisper, and they shall not know my voice.

Isab. But they'll soon discover your sense.

Car. My dear mistress, since you accept my service, I am resolved to ply you so, that I must win you at last.

Theod. You are very resolute, and shall find me so; you think to go on like the French king; we shall have you do as he does by a town in Flanders, set a day when you will take me.

Car. I hope to corrupt you within with love, and make my conquest the easier

so damnably in love, I am afraid thou'lt never own me :
I am a very recreant.

Stan. My mistress is not here neither ; her folly has a little cooled my love, but I have a most abominable lust to her, the wiser passion of the two ; and no despair. Though that rogue Selfish has her mind, I do not doubt but to get her body, which is worth two of it,¹ for my use.

Y. Mag. I wonder pretty Mistress Gartrude is not here.

Sel. I am amazed at it ; for she knew I was to come.

A great knocking at the door. Enter Door-keeper.

Car. How now ! what means this knocking ?

Door-keep. Sir, several ladies and gentlemen knock to get in.

Car. Let the ladies in for nothing, but make the men pay. [*Exit Door-keeper.*

Prig. Had you ever such a chaplain ? I was so disguised, he could not suspect me. Methinks I dispatched the business as well as if I had been used to be married myself.

Lady Cheat. 'Twas very well. I have since gotten my decds from him ; and because he was a main witness to many of my bonds and mortgages, I have made him swear to 'em all before a Master in Chancery, upon pretence that when it should be known he was my husband, his testimony would not be good.

Prig. Ha ! ha ! ha ! This was the prettiest invention, and will make well for us. But where is the fool ?

Lady Cheat. There is a kinsman of mine going for the Indies. I sent him to him with a hundred pound for a venture, and have taken care he shall not come back

¹ Congreve, "like wealthy men, who care not what they *steal*," conveyed this almost literally from Shadwell in the well-known lines :

again ; for he'll clap him under hatches, carry him away, and sell him for a rogue, as he is. He sails this tide.

*Several more come in, Women masked, and Men
of several sorts.*

Several young Coxcombs fool with the Orange-Women.

Orange-Wom. Oranges ! will you have any oranges ?

1st Bully. What Play do they play ? Some confounded Play or other.

Prig. A pox on't, madam ! What should we do at this damned Play-house ? Let's send for some cards, and play at lang-trilloo in the box. Pox on 'em ! I ne'er saw a Play had anything in't ; some of 'em have wit now and then, but what care I for wit ?

Sel. Does my cravat fit well ? I take all the care I can it should ; I love to appear well. What ladies are here in the boxes ? Really I never come to a Play but on account of seeing the ladies.

Car. Door-keeper, are they ready to begin ?

Door-keep. Yes, immediately.

Sel. Now you shall see the ladies make up to me ; where'er I am, they flock about me. I think I am one of the happiest men on earth. I thank Heaven every day for making me just as I am, Bellamour.

Bell. That's Isabella, I am sure ; I know the petticoat. What a devil makes her talk to that rogue ?

[GARTRUDE chooses to sit by SELFISH.

Y. Mag. You'll find it an admirable plot. There's great force and fire in the writing ; so full of business and trick, and very fashionable. It passed through my hands ; some of us helped him in it.

1st Bully. Damme ! when will these fellows begin ? Plague on't ! here's a staying.

2nd Man. Whose Play is this ?

3rd Man. One Prickett's—poet Prickett.

1st Man. Oh, hang him ! Pox on him ! he cannot

Y. Mag. Not write, sir! I am one of his patrons; I know the wits don't like him; but he shall write with any of 'em all for a hundred pound.

Prig. Ay, that he shall. They say he puts no wit in his Plays; but 'tis all one for that, they do the business. He is my poet, too; I hate wit.

Enter several Ladies and several Men.

Door-keep. Pray, sir, pay me; my masters will make me pay it.

3rd Man. Impudent rascal! Do you ask me for money? Take that, sirrah.

2nd Door-keep. Will you pay me, sir?

4th Man. No; I don't intend to stay.

2nd. Door-keep. So you say every day, and see two or three Acts for nothing.

4th Man. I'll break your head, you rascal!

1st Door-keep. Pray, sir, pay me.

3rd Man. Set it down; I have no silver about me, or bid my man pay you.

Theod. What! do gentlemen run on tick for Plays?

Car. As familiarly as with their tailors.

2nd Man. Pox on you, sirrah! Go and bid 'em begin quickly. [*Exit Door-keeper.*

[*They play the curtain-time, then take their places.*

Car. Now they'll begin.

[*SELFISH and Young MAGGOT go to sit down.*

Mag. Don't come to us; let you wits sit together.

Prig. These fellows will be witty, and trouble us. Go to your brother-wits, and make a noise among yourselves, brother wits. [*They go on the other side.*

Sel. I am always hated by the fools; but I think it rather out of envy than malice.

Bell. 'Faith! you shan't sit by us.

Stan. Gentlemen, do not mistake yourselves; for you

Y. Mag. This is mere envy against us writers, **Selfish.**

Sel. It is so. I, for my part, will throw myself at a lady's feet, play with her fan, and fan her gently with it.

THE PLAY BEGINS.

Enter LOVER and WIFE.

Lov. "Dear madam, let us not omit any occasion, but take every opportunity by the hand to improve those amours which have rendered us so happy, to be elevated above the reach of envy."

Wife. "Sir, I should not entertain a thought that might in any wise be prejudicial to our amours, or the improvement thereof; if I were not so extremely obnoxious to the great infelicity of being subject to a husband, whose jealousy has so much the ascendant over him that it renders him so vigilant, not seldom to interrupt our happiest hours."

Lov. "That turbulent temper does too often disorder the fair quiet of his own mind, as well as discompose ours; and jealousy proves as often an obstruction to his own tranquility as it does an impediment to our fruition."

Wife. "It is a privilege too absolutely imperious, which, by a seeming conjugal right, our husbands claim over us, to make so subtile a scrutiny into all our enterprises; since they, with too great regret, entertain the least motion of ours, whereby we would insinuate into their affairs."

Lov. "But since fortune, by so many frequent signalisations, has demonstrated how much she is a friend to us in assisting us with so many subterfuges, when most we have needed them, it will be a heinous tergiversation from her to abandon that trust we formerly have reposed in her; and she may justly take a pique at our infidelity, and, in that caprice, may contrive a revenge suitable to our delinquency."

audacious in tempting her with so much importunity, that it must needs be more vexatious than agreeable; and while we make such vigorous address to another deity, for aught we know, Love may wax jealous of our applications to it: for though he's blind, he can descry, and will greatly resent our dereliction, and when he is incensed his nature is highly vindictive."

Lov. "When Fortune takes such pains to assist us in our amours, Love will certainly be very sensible of our omission; and when he is once provoked, he seldom buries injuries in the grave of oblivion."

Theod. This is very lewd stuff! Is this the new way of writing?

Car. A man would think these lovers in Plays did not care a farthing for one another when they find nothing to do but to be florid, and talk impertinently when they are alone.

Y. Mag. This is a very strong, sinewy, and correct style; and yet neat and florid.

Sel. I have taught 'em all this way of writing. I always strive to write like a gentleman, so easy and well bred.

Prig. These are very good lines, 'faith.

Y. Mag. Nay, 'tis admirably worded, that's the truth on't.

1st Man. Damme! I don't like it.

2nd Man. Pox on the coxcomb that writ it! there's nothing in't.

1st Man. Gad, I love drums, and trumpets, and much ranting, roaring, hussing and fretting, and good store of noise in a Play.

Lov. "I have sufficiently confuted all your argumentation; and nothing then remains but that I should humbly petition to hold the honour of your fair embraces."

Wife. "The motion is so civil, and savours so much of sincere affection, that I can no longer resist it."

Lov. "Let us retire."

Wife. "Come."

[*Exeunt* LOVER and WIFE.]

Bell. So; now they are come to the matter in hand. But here comes the husband.

[*The HUSBAND* knocks at the door, and turns his back

The LOVER kicks him several times, and retires.

Y. Mag. Now it begins to warm; 'tis an admirable plot!

Sel. Bellamour, see how kind the ladies are to me! Pretty rogue! let me repose my head on thy soft bosom.

Bell. 'Sdeath! what's this? She will not speak to me, yet suffers that familiarity with that rascal, as if it were on purpose to provoke me.

Car. Why does not the fool look where the blows come?

Theod. Oh! that would spoil the plot.

Husb. "This must be the devil that strikes me: some whoring rogue or other is gotten with my wife, and the devil pimps for him; but I have a key to a back-door, and will surprise him." [Exit HUSBAND.]

Stan. I cannot find my mistress; but I'll divert myself with a vizard in the meantime.

1st Man. What, not a word! All over in disguise! Silence for your folly, and a vizard for your ill face!

2nd Man [to a Vizard]. Gad! some whore, I warrant you, or chambermaid in her lady's old clothes.

[*He sits down and lolls in the orange-wench's lap.*

3rd Man. She must be a woman of quality; she has right point.

4th Man. 'Faith! she earns all the clothes on her back by lying on't; some punk lately turned out of keeping, her livery not quite worn out.

Isab. I deserve this by coming in a mask; and if I should now discover myself, 'twould make a quarrel.

Prig. You shall see what tricks I'll play; 'faith, I love to be merry.

[*Pat's teeth on the back, and twirls the...*

Enter two LOVERS and WIFE.

2nd Lov. "Have I caught them? I was jealous of this before; but now I will make further discovery."

[2nd LOVER goes under the table.

1st Lov. "In verity, it savours of incivility, to interrupt our joys in the middle of our felicity; but since the barbarous intruder is defeated, let us embrace the present occasion, which seems to court us."

Wife. "If anything which I can do can felicitate you, you may command my person."

2nd Lov. "O damned jade!"

Enter HUSBAND.

Wife. "O God! my husband!"

1st Lov. "'Sdeath; what shall we do?"

Y. Mag. Now it thickens; an admirable plot!

Husb. "O my shins, my shins!"

[The HUSBAND falls over a form, and breaks his shins, and puts out the candle.

Wife. "'Tis as we wished."

Y. Mag. There's a turn! Who would expect that? As great a turn as can be, from darkness to light. Can anything be greater?

[HUSBAND takes up the candle, and blows it in again.

1st Lov. "Now we are undone again."

Husb. "Now tremble at my vengeance, thou most perfidious strumpet; for I will kill thee before thou prayest."

Wife. "What means my dearest honey?"

Husb. "O thou salacious jade! Canst thou ask, when that stallion-rogue is here?"

Wife. "What rogue? Art thou mad? Here's nobody."

Husb. "Nobody! Why, who's that? thou most lascivious quean!"

Wife. "Where?"

Husb. "There"

1st Lov. "How I adore her for her wit!"

Husb. "What fellow's that, huswife?"

Wife. "Which? I see none."

Husb. "But I do; and have at him first."

Wife. "Hold, my dear; if thou seest anybody, it is the devil; and if thou strik'st it, it will tear thee in pieces."

Husb. "Are you mad? Do you see nobody there?"

Wife. "No, Heaven knows, not I. O Heaven, the house is haunted. What does it look like?"

Husb. "O Lord! it looks like a man. Ha! methinks he has glaring eyes. Oh! oh! I see his cloven foot; this is that that struck me just now. O Heaven, help me!"

Wife. "Oh, help! I swoon! I swoon!"

Husb. "Oh, my dear wife! O the devil!"

2nd Lov. "Have I caught you, sir?"

[*1st LOVER goes under the table.*]

1st Lov. "Since you have, for the lady's sake don't discover me."

Wife. "Oh! Is it there still, my dear?"

Husb. "No, I think 'tis gone. Ha! 'tis vanished."

Y. Mag. Well, it concerns me so, I am not able to bear it.

Husb. "My poor dear! I have wronged thee; prithee forgive me."

Wife. "I am always abused thus by you; I am too honest."

Husb. "Prithee forgive me; I will never tax thee more: but I must change my house, if it be thus haunted."

Wife. "I am afraid to live here any longer; do, my dear."

Isab. I see, Bellamour minds no woman but my foolish sister (whom, I fear, he takes for me), yet she is

Sel. Do you not see how fond that pretty creature is of me? I make no doubt but I shall enjoy her person.

Bell. Damnation on this rascal! Can a woman of so much wit like him? I'll watch her; women have odd, fantastic appetites, and there's no trusting of 'em.

2nd Lov. "'Tis too apparent that she is false to me, and I'll revenge it by discovering her to her husband, for all her trick."

1st Lov. "I will cut your throat, if you offer it."

2nd Lov. "Nay then, you rascal, have at you."

[They scuffle under the table, rise with it on their backs; the table falls down; they draw their swords, and fight.]

Husb. "O villainous woman! are these spirits? Now I am convinced; I know one whore-master too well to believe it."

[PRIG strikes a Bully over the back; he takes it to be another, and strikes him.]

1st Man. Zounds, you rogue! do you play tricks with me?

2nd Man. Have at you, dog.

Car. Impudent rascals! have at you all.

[They fight, BELLAMOUR, STANMORE, and CARLOS beat the Bullies out of the house; the actors run off; ladies run out shrieking.]

Sel. I will make good the ladies' retreat.

[He retreats behind the Ladies with his sword drawn.]

Bell. Where is this Selfish gone? I must watch him and the lady. *[Exit BELLAMOUR.]*

Car. What rascals and cowards are these bullies! Where are the ladies? Boy, go out, and bid the players go on.

Enter THEODOSIA and ISABELLA.

Oh, madam! I am ashamed of this disorder.

Theod. Are you not hurt, sir?

Car. Only a little in the head.

you whole. A hurt in the hand? why, 'tis gotten with opening of oysters, and cured with a cobweb.

Car. If you will but pity the wounds you give yourself I'll ne'er complain to you of any other.

Isab. Theodosia may affect ill-nature, which perhaps her heart is no more guilty of than mine; but I am sure I am extremely troubled at your hurt, and would not have you neglect it.

Car. You are too obliging; 'tis slight, and worth neither of your cares.

Gart. O Lord! Mr. Carlos is hurt; I shall swoon. Oh, dear sir! my heart went pit-a-pat all the while you were fighting.

Car. That pretty heart should only leap for joy.

Lady Busy. Sir, pray let me be so happy as to apply my white ointment; 'tis very sovereign for a green wound.

Lady Cheat. I have a balsam that never fails; and I were most unhappy if one I esteem so well should miscarry for want of it.

Theod. Here's a-do about a slight hurt! a butcher at the Bear-Garden makes nothing of forty such; I would have the sun shine through my servant now and then.

Car. You would have one serve you as they do a mountebank, to be run through for him.

Isab. I cannot rest till I see if Bellamour be wounded.

[*Exit* ISABELLA.]

Enter one of the Actors.

Actor. Sir, we cannot go on with our Play; one of our young women, being frighted with the swords, is fallen into a fit, and carried home sick.

Car. Boy, go and find the company; I have prepared an entertainment upon the stage; we'll have an entry, a song, or some music; there is no loss of the Play; this Prickett can write none but low farce, and his fools are rather odious than ridiculous.

Car. My cruel mistress! you see I had some favour from every one but yourself.

Theod. I believe it has cost you five pounds in penny glee, to get the goodwill of the old ladies; and the hopes of marriage has prevailed upon the young ones.

Car. I was never so serious as that comes to with any but yourself.

Theod. No more of this; I accept your entertainment.

The SCENE changes to the Stage and Scenes.

Enter SELFISH and GARTRUDE.

Sel. Now, if your love has any resolution, you may enjoy me, and make yourself the happiest lady in town, and please me too.

Gart. Indeed you are so well bred, and so much a gentleman, the ladies cannot but love you.

Sel. I have no reason to complain.

Gart. And then you dress so finely.

Sel. Indeed, most young fellows, when they come to town, dress at me: but, pretty creature, let us retire.

Gart. What you please, dear sir, if you'll be civil.

Sel. Pretty soul! how she loves me! I am a rogue to be false to these poor creatures. While they divert themselves with the vulgar entertainments of music and dancing, I will steal the happiest minute that love and beauty can afford.

Gart. You shall not need to steal; I'll give you anything: but will you make a song on me?

Sel. Thou shalt be my Chloris, my Phyllis, Celia, my all. Let's away, my dear.

[Exeunt SELFISH and GARTRUDE.]

Enter BELLAMOUR.

Bell. Whither is that rascal carrying Isabella? She must do this on purpose to make me mad, for I can

Enter STANMORE *and* ISABELLA.

Stan. Well, you must be my mistress ; my heart beats and I have a thousand disorders upon me, which none but she can cause.

Isab. It beats a false alarm for once ; you see I am not she, but she is somewhere behind the scenes ; pray go, and look after her. [*Exit* STANMORE.]

Enter CARLOS *and* THEODOSIA.

Theod. Prithee pull off thy mask and conceal thyself no longer.

Isab. Do not discover me. I hear Bellamour keeps a player ; I am resolved to watch him, and see if I can make any discovery.

Enter Lady CHEATLY, Lady BUSY, PRIG, *and* MAGGOT.

Mag. Madam, your ladyship is so pestered with this gamester Prig, that I cannot have time to talk with you.

Lady Cheat. I am so ; and I have business of great concernment to confer with you about ; would I were rid of him.

Mag. I'll have a trick for him.

Prig. Sirrah, Maggot ! I will not suffer you to talk to my lady ; she is mine, you old fool.

Mag. Come out, you young blockhead, and let our swords try whose she is.

Prig. Let's fight here ; I would have my mistress see how I put in my pass, and what a yerk I give it.

Mag. Thou overgrown coward !

Lady Cheat. Gentlemen, I must not suffer quarrelling before me ; Mr. Prig, be more temperate.

Prig. I will, madam ; though 'tis hard, when love or honour bids me draw.

Enter YOUNG MAGGOT.

a poem about me which I'll entertain you with, that perhaps may be more agreeable: I will read it to you.

Car. But first let's have a dance.

Y. Mag. With all my heart.

Lady Cheat. Do you hear, carpenter? Can you make the machines work? I shall have use of 'em.

Carpent. Yes, madam.

Lady Cheat. Pray be ready, when I give you order. Do you hear? Thus. Let us all sit and see this dance.

[*An Entry of Clowns.*

Enter LUMP.

Lady Cheat. My brother's here! What shall we do now?

Lump. I'm ashamed, sister, of your sin and vanity; and cannot in conscience let you alone in your evil ways. What makes you in this wicked place? this sink of sin? this house of abominations? where wise men and godly men are abused? It is great wickedness, and I cannot be silent; my zeal and wisdom will not let me be silent.

Lady Cheat. Brother, have a little breeding, as well as zeal and wisdom, and do not disturb the gentlemen.

Lump. I care not for breeding; shall zeal and wisdom give place to that? I say 'tis not lawful, 'tis sinful, 'tis abominable, to come under the roof with these hornets: there is wit, flashy wit, stirring here; and I would as soon be in a pest-house.

Lady Cheat. I must comply with those I have designs upon, for my fortune's sake, and for my daughters.

Lump. That does something mollify the sin, but it is too great, and I cannot bear it. Cannot you take religious courses, in order to your design, and then you may serve Heaven and yourself together? You are foolish, very foolish, and have no method in you.

Car. This gentleman is going to read a pious poem to us: pray do not interrupt him.

great call to it; all poetry is abominable, and all wit is an idol, a very Dagon; I will down with it. All the wise and godly party of the nation hate wit.

Y. Mag. None but fools hate wit, and those that cannot think; for my part I will venture my blood in defence of poetry.

Lump. I will preach against it while I have breath.

Y. Mag. Peace, fool! I will read on.

Lump. Sister, you shall not hear it; 'tis profane, abominable, a grace-resisting, soul-destroying, conscience-choking, most unutterably sin-nourishing thing, and I cannot bear it; I cannot suffer it.

[LADY CHEATLY whistles; two Mock-devils descend, and fly up with LUMP.]

Murder! Murder! what dost thou do, Satan? whither dost thou fly with me?

Y. Mag. This is very well! Ha! ha! ha! now I may read in quiet.

Prig. Pray, my dear, let's be going; I hate this wit; I think Mr. Lump is in the right.

Lady Cheat. Sit but a while, and I'll go.

Y. Mag. [*reads*]:

“Beauty, thou great preserver of the world,
By which into dead Lump quick life is hurled.”

[PRIG and YOUNG MAGGOT are carried up in their chairs, and hang in the air.]

Lady Cheat. So, now I shall have time to speak with you.

[*Exeunt* MAGGOT, LADY CHEATLY, and LADY BUSY.]

Prig. Hold! hold! Murder! Murder! what a devil do you mean? My dear! Honey! Where is my lady? Madam! Madam!

Y. Mag. What can this mean? But hold: I'll read on if you will.

“Beauty, thou great,” &c.

[*All go out and leave them hanging*]

your wit, sirrah! This is your wit, you damned wit, you!

Y. Mag. You lie, fool! 'tis a wheedle, a cross-bite of the widow's

Prig. O you damned scribbling, senseless, sing-song wit!

Y. Mag. O you damned gaming, jockey, hunting, tennis-fool!

Enter BELLAMOUR.

Bell. Hell and damnation! what have I seen? A curse on all the sex! Is this the virtue she pretended to? to be lewd with so despicable a coxcomb as Selfish, so nauseous a fellow! Death and hell!

Prig. Hark you, Bellamour: Prithee help me down.

Y. Mag. Pray let me down.

Bell. Pox on you both!

Enter SELFISH.

Sel. Ah, Bellamour! I am the happiest man, I think, that ever the sun shined on: I have enjoyed the prettiest creature, just now, in a room behind the scenes: I cannot help telling of thee, because thou art my friend. 'Faith! telling is half the pleasure to me; for, I confess to thee, I think we that are happy in ladies' affections make love as much for vanity as anything else. You know the lady.

Bell. Damn the dog! [*Aside.*] 'Twas one of my Lady Cheatly's daughters; which of 'em was it?

Sel. Well, I can keep nothing from thee; it was one of 'em; but upon your honour keep it secret; guess which; they are both desperately in love with me, ha!

Bell. Impudent rascal and coxcomb!

[*He strikes him, then beats him with his sword.*]

Sel. What ill breeding is this? Are you distracted?

Enter ISABELLA.

Sel. I will not be uncivil before a lady; another time I shall call you to an account. An ill-bred fellow!

[*Exit* SELFISH.]

Isab. What's the reason of this quarrel?

Bell. Here, carpenter!

Carpent. Here, sir.

Bell. Let down those fools, and dispose of 'em, so they may not trouble us.

Prig. So; this is well.

Y. Mag. Bellamour, I thank you.

[*Carpenter lets them down, and presently they sink down and roar out.*]

Bell. You know too well the occasion of the quarrel.

Isab. What do you mean?

Bell. Is all your pretence of virtue come to this? and must my love be thus rewarded?

Isab. This rudeness of yours amazes me.

Bell. 'Tis I have cause to be amazed, to be refused the favour, and you to grant it to that filthy fool, Selfish! There's nothing but dissembling, treachery and ingratitude in your whole sex.

Isab. A favour to Selfish! The fool of all the world I scorn and hate the most; but now I see you'll give me occasion to rank you with him.

Bell. No, you shall never rank me with him; I scorn to be obliged to one who is so free to lay out herself upon such an ass.

Isab. Has that vain rascal lied on me? and do you believe him?

Bell. My eyes will not lie, madam; I will trust them; and though you have let down the skirt, I know the petticoat too well.

Isab. Unworthy man! I could stab thee for this affront, but that thou art not worthy of a serious thought. Is this the petticoat you mean? What has my foolish sister done?

♦ *Enter* STANMORE *and* GARTRUDE *barefaced.*

Heaven and earth! 'twas Gartrude, I see now.

Isab. I scorn and hate thee for thy base suspicion more than all mankind.

Bell. Madam, I am a dog, a villain, not fit to live; kill me; for if you forgive me not I'll do't myself.

Isab. I'll never see thy odious face again, do what thou wilt: farewell, base man! [*Exit* ISABELLA.

Bell. Hell and devils! what has my rashness brought me to? [*Exit* BELLAMOUR.

Stan. Pretty miss! be not so troubled; I have used thee kindly, very kindly.

Gart. Kindly? O fad! I'll tell my mother what you have done to me, so I will.

Stan. Thou art not mad, child! Prithee don't.

Gart. But I was mad to let you be so uncivil, and I will tell her; here she is.

Enter LADY BUSY, LADY CHEATLY, *and* MAGGOT.

Stan. 'S heart! what a fool she is! I'll not stand the brunt. [*Exit* STANMORE.

Mag. Well, madam, I'll dispatch the business, and wait on you again. [*Exit* MAGGOT.

Gart. Oh, madam! what shall I do? what shall I do?

Lady Cheat. What's the matter?

Gart. I thought what 'twould come to; you charged me to be civil to Stanmore, and I am deflowered, so I am.

Lady Cheat. O Heaven! What, did he ravish you?

Gart. No; because you bid me be civil to him, I consented; I was afraid to anger you, madam.

Lady Cheat. Civil? that was civil with a vengeance! Let me come, I'll knock her on the head, filthy creature!

Lady Busy. Hold, madam! be wise, and make the best on't; let me alone to manage this affair. Come,

Gart. He settled nothing but himself upon me, that I know.

Lady Cheat. No, that's the plague: I knew there was no settlement; if that had been done, it had been somewhat.

Lady Busy. Go to; be patient; let me alone. Withdraw, good madam, and trust me. [*Exit LADY CHEATLY.*]

Enter STANMORE.

Come on, Mr. Stanmore, I must talk with you a little.

Stan. Now for a wise lecture.

Lady Busy. Look up, pretty miss; come on. Sir, my Lady Cheatly is a worthy person, and of good quality; right—Mistress Gartrude is a very pretty young lady—true—nor is it fit my lady (who has entertained you so often and so nobly in her house) should be abused—do you conceive me?—nor is it fit that this pretty young thing should be injured—you understand me—

Stan. Your ladyship speaks like an oracle.

Lady Busy. Very good—this pretty thing, I understand, has been very kind to you. Very well—

Stan. Fie, miss! fie! tell tales out of school? If she has, I am sure, I was as kind as she could be, for her heart.

Lady Busy. Very good. Come, I understand you. Ah, what pleasure 'tis to lie by such a sweet bedfellow! Such pretty little swelling breasts! such delicate black sparkling eyes! such a fresh complexion! such red pouting lips! and such a skin! I say no more—in short, she would make a husband very happy. Come, let it be so, and let no more words be made of the matter.

Stan. I'll do what I can to help her to one.

Lady Busy. Go to — that's well said — yourself then be the man. Oh, how the town will envy you the enjoyment of so fine a lady!

Stan. 'S heart, madam! what do you take me for? If

Lady Busy. Go to ; she may make as good a wife as can be, for all that ; have you not many examples ?

Stan. No, madam ; I have made a vow of chastity, that way, which I will never break.

Lady Busy. I would not my lady should know this for the world ; she would be revenged to the last degree. Let me tell you, you have been very uncivil.

Stan. 'Faith, madam, I think not.

Gart. Yes, but you have been uncivil though, that you have.

Lady Busy. Go to—do you mind ? Do you think a family is to be dishonoured ? is that like a gentleman. Nay, not but that human frailty must be passed by—for young people, when they meet, are apt and liable—'tis confessed—but then—ay, what then ?—why, your gentlemen and your worthy persons strive to make it good. Very well. But how is it to be made good ? hum—why, either by marriage or settlement.

Stan. I have a private reason must keep me from doing either.

Lady Busy. No, no, that won't pass : I know you are too much a gentleman. Besides, you made me a promise you would keep ; and let me tell you, my honour is concerned in it, and I would not have my honour touched for the world.

Stan. I did not promise to keep for another ; as I must, if I keep her.

Gart. You do not say true then.

Lady Busy. Fie, Mr. Stanmore, that you should say such an ungenteel thing ! Come, miss, bear up, and do not cry. How can you endure to see a young lady's tears and not melt ! Come on, pretty miss, I am sure you will be kind and constant to Mr. Stanmore ; will you not ?

Gart. Yes, yes.

Lady Busy. Why look you, sir, I know you are a gentleman, and will consider of a settlement

Stan. No, madam ; Selfish, this evening, in a green room, behind the scenes, was beforehand with me ; she ne'er tells of that. Can I love one that prostitutes herself to that fellow ?

Lady Busy. How's this !

Gart. O sad, that you should say such a thing ! I am sure he will not say so for the world : 'would I might ne'er stir out of this place alive now, if I did.

Stan. I had it from his own mouth.

Gart. O Lord ! I'll be far enough if you had ! I'm sure he's too fine a gentleman, and too well bred, to tell such a grievous lie of a lady ; I am sure he did not say so, that he did not !

Stan. How she commends him !

Lady Busy. You know, Selfish is the vainest fellow that ever was born ; can you believe that coxcomb ? It is not generous.

Stan. Shall I believe Bellamour's eyes ? He saw it. Good madam, be pleased to forbear your tricks upon me. Farewell. I hate the leavings of a fool ; I'll as soon eat the meat he has chewed, or wear his foul linen after him. Adieu, good madam. [*Exit STANMORE.*

Lady Busy. Now see what your indiscretion hath done ! Did I not tell you, Selfish would undo you ?

Gart. Oh, what shall I do ? what shall I do ? Does your ladyship think you could not get Mr. Selfish to marry me ? Oh ! he's the prettiest man ; I could live and die with him !

Lady Busy. Go to ; you will utterly ruin yourself. Do you think a fellow that has been so base to boast of your kindness will marry you ? Peace, I say ; I'll try another ; Young Maggot shall be the man.

Gart. I can't abide him.

Lady Busy. I say, go to—you must marry him, if he will, and be glad on't too ; Stanmore has forsaken you ; Selfish can't keep you, your mother will turn you out of doors, and you will starve. Come, come along with me, and be better advised



ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*Enter PRIG and LADY CHEATLY.*



PRIG. Now, madam, I hope you will be persuaded to dispatch this business of wedlock this morning; 'twould be much more convenient for me than to-morrow, because I am going to Newmarket to a cock-match: I have laid fifty pounds upon Jackanapes, against Tom Prig's Boxen Beak; my Dun fights a battle with Tom Whiskin's Duck-Wing, for fifty pounds; 'twill be the best sport in the world. I would fain marry to-day, and go thither to-morrow. Will your ladyship go and see it?

Lady Cheat. No; pray, sir, if that be the best sport in the world, see that first, and marry afterwards.

Prig. Newmarket's a rare place! there a man's never idle. We make visits to horses, and talk with grooms, riders, and cock-keepers, and saunter in the Heath all the forenoon; then we dine, and never talk a word but of dogs, cocks, and horses; then we saunter into the Heath again; then to a cock-match; then to a play in a barn; then to supper; and never speak a word but of dogs, cocks, and horses again; then to the Groom-porter's, where you may play all night. Oh, 'tis a heavenly life! we are never idle.

Lady Cheat. For aught I see, you are never otherwise.

Enter Steward.

Stew. Yes, perfidious woman! I am returned, and will make you know, that I am not to be used so. What! to be clapped under hatches, and carried to the Indies, to be sold for a slave? a fine design truly! but come, madam, I will make you know your lord and master.

Lady Cheat. What means your impudence?

Stew. Impudence! to command my wife? Know your duty.

Prig. Your wife! why, you are her man, are you not?

Stew. What fellow's this? I must have new orders; I must have no such customers about my house.

Lady Cheat. Call a constable; the poor fellow's distracted!

Stew. No, but I may make the lady so, if she persists in her impudence.

Prig. Thou art very saucy to thy lady and mistress.

Stew. Peace, fool! saucy to my wife!

Prig. Fool! ha, fool! what a pox would you be at?

Lady Cheat. Impudent villain! thy wife?

Stew. Most audacious woman! dar'st thou deny it? Was I not married to you yesterday in your own chamber, by a parson of your own choosing?

Lady Cheat. How dar'st thou affirm so impudent a lie? Where didst thou dream this?

Prig. I have my cue; I'll have my hand in the plot

[*Exit PRIG.*]

Stew. Why, thou most infamous of women? can'st thou deny this?

Lady Cheat. Yes, thou most impudent of rascals, I will deny it to all the world; and I have taken care that thou shalt never prove it.

Stew. Hell and devils! is there one amongst you like this woman.

Lady Cheat. Well, if you will be quiet, and stir no farther in this business, a thousand pounds is yours; if not, you never shall have me, nor anything of mine.

Stew. No, base woman ; I'll undo thee.

Lady Cheat. 'Tis out of your power, fool ; you have sworn to all my bonds and deeds already.

Stew. Most vile of cheats ! I'll find your parson, if he be in England.

Enter PRIG in the habit of a Parson.

O happy fortune ! here he is.

Lady Cheat. What means this coxcomb Prig ?

Stew. Now, madam. Did not you marry me to this lady yesterday ? Speak, upon the word of a priest.

Prig. Yes, I did.

Stew. Now, what says your impudence ? I thought I should catch you. Were you so cunning to deny it. Where do you live, sir ?

Prig. Madam, pray help me off with my habit.

Lady Cheat. This is well enough.

Stew. Ha ! What a devil's this ! Were you the parson ?

Prig. Yes, good sir.

Lady Cheat. Yes, this was my chaplain, you saucy fool ! Could you think I would marry such a filthy fellow as you are ?

Stew. I will give you to understand, madam, that 'tis a good marriage. And I'll bring you into the court to swear it, sir.

Prig. If you do, sir, I'll hold six to four I forswear it, sir.

Stew. Why, sure you dare not ?

Prig. By Heaven, I dare, and will forswear myself for such a widow. Gentlemen forswear themselves to get whores, and make nothing on't. Begone out of my house, she is mine ; fellow, begone, I say.

Stew. Curse on my shallow head ! that I should be so credulous to believe her to be true to me, when I was an hourly witness of her falsehood to others ! I will

to visit all those you have had business with this month, and I shall tell 'em such a tale—— [Exit STEWARD.]

Prig. I'll cut his throat ; say no more.

Lady Cheat. Pray hasten after this malicious, clamorous rascal, and stop him, some way or other ; he'll invent a thousand lies of me ; get him arrested upon an action of ten thousand pounds, at my suit.

Prig. Let me alone ; I'll do as becomes a gentleman. [Exit PRIG.]

Lady Cheat. This trouble, joined with that fool my daughter, will undo me ; but I'll find out Maggot, and he shall help to salve up all.

Enter MAGGOT.

Oh, Mr. Maggot ! I have business to communicate to you, of the greatest concernment to me that ever happened.

Mag. Gad, madam, do ! If any man in England understands business, or loves it better than I do, I'll be burnt.

Lady Cheat. Every man loves what he is good at ; give me a man of business for my friend. The fine gentlemen of the town are like fiddlers, only good at idle hours.

Mag. There are no great persons at this end of the town have any business, but I do it for 'em. I am the busiest man in England, and, I hope, madam, you'll consider of my love to business, and to your ladyship.

Lady Cheat. Why, that is part of the business I am to confer with you about.

Enter LADY BUSY and YOUNG MAGGOT.

Lady Busy. Madam, I beg you will retire ; I have an affair with young Mr. Maggot, that concerns you and Mistress Gartrude. [Exit LADY CHEATLY and MAGGOT.] Mr. Maggot, I can never enough admire your uncle Maggot's aversion to wit and breeding ; nor can I choose but pity you, who are like to be so great sufferer for your love to both.

Lady Busy. Well, many a man would be proud of such a nephew. But is it true that you are like to be disinherited?

Y. Mag. It is as true as I myself will ever be to wit and beauty, unless I will recant my works, and for the future renounce tropes, figures, similes, and all ornaments of speech.

Lady Busy. These are hard conditions.

Y. Mag. A man of my vigorous imagination had as good have been born dumb. I will sing, and starve to death, like a grasshopper, e'er I submit.

Lady Busy. Go to; suppose some friend of yours, more careful of you than you are of yourself, should find a way to compose this matter without prejudice to your poetry?

Y. Mag. That friend should be another Apollo, if a man, and a tenth Muse to me if a woman.

Lady Busy. Good! There is a woman—a pretty one—young and rich, too, in the case. Very well. But how shall I come by this woman? say you. Go to—let me alone—a fine woman, with a good fortune, were no ill refuge from the anger of an uncle. Ha!

Y. Mag. But if I should marry, what will the world say of my wit? I had rather lose my honour, and starve, than lose the name of a wit.

Lady Busy. Your reputation is established already; go to, consider.

Y. Mag. But, madam, my heart is engaged, and the poor soul loves me again to madness. I did but kiss my hand to a lady in a window the other day, and the poor thing fell into a fit; she will never outlive such a heinous tergiversation.

Lady Busy. Come, come, you know not the world. This is some soft-hearted fool that will be as fond of another in three days. Go to. I know the sex better than you. But such a reputation, such a face, and such

Y. Mag. Nay, if she has a better face and reputation than my Gartrude, I will forswear poetry and write shorthand at Conventicles all the rest of my life.

Lady Busy. Is she the woman? My Lady Cheatly looks very high for her daughter. Stanmore and several fortunes are about her. Do you conceive me?

Y. Mag. That's all one.

As for my part, I have chosen one,

And I'll have my love, or I'll have none.

Lady Busy. Hold! A lady of fortune, beauty, and one that loves you and admires you for your wit, is not to be neglected.

Y. Mag. How? Then she has wit, too.

Lady Busy. How else should she admire it in you?

Y. Mag. Since she has wit I will see her, that's certain, and love her, if I can. If not, I'll make her some handsome excuse for't in my next song.

Enter GARTRUDE.

Lady Busy. Well, then, here she comes. It is this pretty Gartrude. Ah! what a bedfellow is this, with above ten thousand pounds, too!

Y. Mag. Pretty creature! Are you she?

Gart. Yes, that I am.

Y. Mag. But, madam, do you not think marriage will spoil my poetry?

Gart. I would not marry you if I thought it would, for I love your verses dearly.

Lady Busy. Stanmore and Selfish will hang themselves when they hear of your good fortune.

Y. Mag. Ay, so they will.

Gart. Everybody says they love one to one's face; but you said so behind my back. I heard you tell my lady so, and I am resolved I will have you, though my mother turn me out of doors—that I will.

Lady Busy. Go, get you together, loving rogues: and

Enter SELFISH and ISABELLA.

Sel. Consider my person and my breeding. Think not of Bellamour, he has two ladies with child by him, and one claims marriage.

Isab. You had best marry her for him; he'll give a good portion.

Sel. I did not think so harsh a repartee could have come out of that pretty mouth. Sure, you take something ill from me. My conduct among the ladies does not please you. I confess I have been somewhat too general in my addresses; but I am resolved to apply myself to you, and be less gallant hereafter.

Isab. Be less vain and less a coxcomb; and know that nothing you forbear or do can please or trouble me.

Sel. Were I not skilled in the various dispositions of your soft sex, these words would make me despair; but I have often known such peevishness the child of love.

Isab. Were I a man I'd cudgel you out of this conceit of yourself; but as I am I can only despise and laugh at you.

Sel. Ha! ha! ha! You are pleasant, and I am glad to find you so. I often discover ladies' affections to me that way; for I am sure they love me when they are so familiar with me, my pretty railer.

Isab. Monster of vanity, begone!

Enter BELLAMOUR.

Bell. I beg upon my knees, you will once more hear me.

Isab. I never will.

Sel. It is in vain. Give her over, Bellamour. What wouldst thou have her do, poor lady? She loves me. Dost thou think ever to get a lady where I am? Why, my mother has often told me I was born with a caul upon my head, and she wrapped me up in her shift to make me lucky to ladies.

house ; but follow me, or I'll cut your throat here. You are the occasion of this storm.

Sel. With all my heart. I did intend to demand satisfaction for your ill-breeding at the Playhouse ; and you shall find I can fight as well as I can make love.

Bell. Come on, Vanity. [Exeunt.]

Enter CARLOS and THEODOSIA.

Theod. I see you are resolved to watch me, to make me confess love, as they do witches, to make 'em own their contracts with the devil.

Car. If you would but look a little guiltily, I would take you upon suspicion.

Theod. And so hurry me away to execution. Alas, poor Carlos ! Don't I look as if I died for thee ? Are not my eyes languishing enough ?

Car. You are pleasant, madam, as becomes a winning gamester.

Theod. If I should play on, luck may turn. I think 'tis best to give over as I am.

Car. But consider how entirely I love you.

Theod. Consider how little I care for you.

Car. The greatest beauties are not always most sincerely loved.

Theod. No, they are commonly like great places, courted and won by vain designing knaves ; and were I such I should be yet more suspicious.

Car. A man that's ready to die a martyr need make no other professions. I should else——

Theod. Talk like an ass of charms and tyranny of mine, of chains and slavery of yours. A man that should overhear you would think you had been taken by the Turk.

Car. 'Tis not in your power to make me leave loving you.

Theod. 'Tis very unreasonable that my indifference

Car. 'Tis very unreasonable that my perseverance should not make you love me more ; but I will yet hope.

Theod. Hope is a thin diet, and may be allowed in your feverish condition ; and indeed is the only food that love can live on.

Car. Oh, madam ! Marriage——

Theod. Is to love as the Jesuit's powder to an ague ; it stops the fit, and in a little time wears it quite off.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. My dear, how dost thou ? Carlos, will you forgive me ? Lovers take it as ill to be parted as men of honour.

Car. I was just upon the point of yielding.

Theod. I scorn to take advantages ; but I had reduced him to offer marriage.

Isab. Then, it seems, he is weary of being your slave, and would make you his.

Car. Madam, you should be generous and take the weakest side. No, I am resolved ever to be her servant, but would be glad of a nearer employment about her person.

Theod. Come, prithee, Isabella, let's take a turn in the garden, and see if we can talk of something else.

Car. Where'er I go, I shall carry my love with me ; and that will not suffer me to talk or think of anything but your dear self. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELLAMOUR and SELFISH in the Field.

Bell. Come, sir, I hope you like this place ; you are very nice in choosing one.

Sel. Yes, I like this ; for here I run one man through, and gave another his life.

Bell. Let me see if you be armed or not.

Sel. No, I am too well bred for that.

Bell. Make ready.

not fight, the ladies will not be so apt to love me as they are. [*Aside.*]

Bell. Come, will you never have done?

Sel. Yes, sir. What great haste are you in?

“Beauty! what art thou, but a fading flower?”

Bell. Beauty! What a devil hast thou to do with beauty? You are a damned ugly, ill-bred coxcomb, and the ladies care not one jot for you. Draw.

Sel. Come on; I will vindicate myself and the ladies. Now for the ladies.

[*They fight; BELLAMOUR throws SELFISH down, and takes his sword.*]

Do not kill me; consider how the ladies will hate you, if you should.

Bell. No, prithee live, and be an ass still; but trouble me no more.

Sel. Thou art a strange, rough, ill-bred fellow, to fight so, to fling a man down, and spoil his clothes; you have dirted all my garniture, and spoiled my cravat. Could not you have fought easily, handsomely, and like a gentleman? You were never bred in an academy; they never fight thus brutally in France.

Bell. This is ridiculous enough.

Sel. I warrant you have done me ten pounds worth of hurt, with fighting with me; I do not know how to appear before the ladies; I can't abide such tricks.

Bell. Fare thee well. If I were not extremely troubled about Isabella, I would divert myself with this coxcomb. [*Exit BELLAMOUR.*]

Sel. A brutal fellow, to spoil one's things thus! But I'll go home, and dress me. [*Exit SELFISH.*]

Enter LADY CHEATLY and MAGGOT.

Lady Cheat. You see I have considered your passion, and how apt you are for business; I am afraid of a suit or two in law, which I know you can manage.

Lady Cheat. I have told you of the insolence of the Steward, and the artifice I used to get rid of him.

Mag. That shows your ladyship understands business. How happy shall I be! how I shall laugh at and triumph over all my rivals!

Lady Cheat. Not a word of what has passed betwixt us till a fitter opportunity.

Enter PRIG with a plaister upon his face.

How now, Mr. Prig! what ails your face?

Prig. Be not frightened, my dear; 'tis no great hurt.

Mag. My dear! Poor fool, how I pity him!

Prig. I went to stop that rogue, your Steward, and demand satisfaction, as becomes a gentleman; and, in fine, we drew, and after some two or three and thirty passes I found myself run into the arm and the face; but I worsted him. Yet, when I was at a surgeon's, the rascal got away.

Lady Cheat. I am sorry you should venture so much for me.

Prig. Oh, madam! 'twas for myself; for we are to be all one flesh. Now nothing troubles me, but that this hurt will hinder my journey to Newmarket to-morrow.

Mag. He all one flesh with her! poor coxcomb!

Enter two Scriveners.

1st Scriv. Madam, I wonder a lady of quality should be guilty of such fraud and covin, to write bonds with ink that will wear out in a month!

2nd Scriv. Other ink you have too, that with a spirit rubbed upon the paper, will make an impression through a whole quire.

Lady Cheat. What mean these fellows! Are you mad?

1st Scriv. No; but this is enough to make us mad, for ourselves and our clients to be cheated of such sums!

2nd Scriv. Pray, madam, give us security; and let

the hands with my own ink

Mag. What's the meaning of this? Is my lady a cheat!

Prig. This is the rogue your Steward's lie.

Lady Cheat. Oh, gentlemen! you have been with that rascal, my Steward, the most impudent villain! who having most of the writings that concern my estate in his hands, had the impudence to threaten to burn 'em unless I would marry him.

Prig. 'Tis very true, upon my honour.

Lady Cheat. I, by a wile, got 'em out of his hands; and he, out of revenge for being so disappointed, has invented these malicious lies; but I shall lay him fast enough.

Enter two Citizens.

1st Cit. Madam, we did not think your ladyship would put such things upon us, to give us false notes for our money!

2nd Cit. Notes written with ink that will wear out; we shall have nothing but blanks for our money!

1st Cit. Pray let me have my five hundred pound again.

2nd Cit. And me, mine; you have not laid it out yet.

Lady Cheat. What! my rogue of a Steward has been with you too, has he?

2nd Cit. Rogue! he's an honest man to give us notice of this deceit. Madam, I wonder your ladyship is not ashamed!

Prig. How now, impudence? I tell you, the Steward is the cheat and rogue; he has lied, and abused you; my lady is a person of honour.

Mag. Ha! there must be something in this; he would not be so foolish to tell so silly a lie.

2nd Scriv. My lady is a worthy person, and the Steward has invented these lies out of revenge; because he had the impudence to pretend to marry my lady, and would have kept all her writings, he'd forced her to do it; but she was so much afraid of him, that she

Enter LUMP.

Lump. Oh, thou vile woman! thou reprobate! thou most audacious, fear-conscienced creature! Could such a wicked branch spring from our family, who are precious godly men and women, all but thyself!

Lady Cheat. Are you mad, brother?

Enter Steward.

Lump. I knew you would cheat the rest: but must you betray me, and give me false deeds? Must I have nothing but blanks for my money?

1st Scriv. What ails she?

1st Cit. How are we cheated!

Mag. 'Sdeath! there must be some fire under all this smoke.

Lump. Had it not been for this honest man; who was troubled in conscience, and could no longer conceal your fraud, I had ne'er known it; but now I will make an example of you.

1st Cit. How, sir? you are a precious, godly man, and knew of a cheat, and would not discover it!

2nd Cit. One of our own church too, to suffer us to be betrayed!

Lump. I had no call to it, till now I am myself concerned.

Lady Cheat. Will you believe this most infamous rascal, that would have dishonoured your family; and having all my writings, would have married me, or have burnt 'em! I, by seeming to consent to his desires, got 'em out of his hands, made him to swear to 'em before a Master in Chancery; then I turned him away for a villain, as he is.

Lump. What say you, sir? [To the Steward.

Prig. Say? I'll hold six to four he cannot say a word. Upon my honour, this is all true, to my knowledge.

and I do assure you ye are all cheated, and in less than a month will have nothing to show for all your money. I cannot in conscience but reveal this.

Lady Cheat. Impudent, lying varlet ! How darest thou affirm so devilish a lie ?

Stew. Will you marry me yet ? and I'll retrieve all.

[*Whispers.*

Lady Cheat. O Heaven and earth ! The villain whispers me in the ear now, and tells me, if I will marry him, he will deny all !

Stew. Mercy upon me ! Will your ladyship's conscience give you leave to say that ? Pray, madam, consider your soul.

1st Cit. Ay, madam, consider your soul.

2nd Cit. And the payment of my money.

Lady Cheat. Heaven can witness, what I say is true ; even just now he asked me to marry him.

Lump. If this be true, lady sister, I will ask your pardon.

Stew. What need I ask that which I have already ? I am married to her.

All. How !

Stew. And her great anger, and the reason she would have sold me to Jamaica, was because I could not in confidence conceal these deceits, though I might have had the benefit of 'em.

Lady Cheat. This is so extravagantly ridiculous, it makes me laugh ; I will not give a serious answer to it.

Mag. Ha ! Married ! You did not consummate, I hope ? Who married you ?

Stew. Why, the truth is, she thought to put a false marriage upon me. When she discovered my intention of making restitution to those she had injured, she dressed that fellow Prig in the disguise of a parson, and he married us in her bed-chamber. But I'll make her know 'tis a good marriage.

Stew. No, till this day he appeared in it to me, and then pulled it off, to show me 'twas a mock marriage, as they thought ; but I will make 'em know otherwise.

Lady Cheat. This is the most amazing impudence ! Mr. Prig, declare yourself ; deny it, or we are undone.

[*Aside.*

Prig. Is there ever a magistrate here ? I will swear that there is not one word of all this true ; I know not what he means. I'll hold gold to silver, he's mad.

Lady Cheat. Do you see, brother, what a rascal you have believed ? and how you have injured me ?

Lump. Why, thou wicked locust ! thou spawn of a serpent ! to invent such cursed lies ! I'll lay thee within four walls.

Stew. By Heaven, 'tis all true ! I'll swear it. Nay, I'll swear with you for a thousand pound.

Mag. Let him swear it, that we may have his ears.

* *1st Cit.* Madam, we ask your pardon, with all our hearts.

2nd Cit. Impudent fellow ! to abuse my lady so !

Stew. Let me but speak !

1st Scriv. No, base fellow ! thou shalt not speak.

2nd Scriv. Abuse so worthy a lady ! Out, thou wicked fellow !

Stew. 'Tis very fine !

Lump. Lay an action of ten thousand pound upon him ; see who will bail him. To my certain knowledge she has a great estate, and has been always a very conscientious woman. Indeed, I was something amazed at this story.

1st Cit. Ay, sir, we believe your worship.

2nd Cit. We know you are a precious, godly man.

Stew. Are you distracted ? Well, be all cheated an you will ; I have discharged my conscience.

Lump. Conscience ! thou seed of Belzebub !

Prig. Conscience ! an impudent rogue, that offers to forswear himself ! I offered to lay him ten to one 'twas all false, and you saw he durst not bet.

1st Scriv. Hang him !

2nd Scriv. Base, lying rogue !

Enter Serjeants.

1st Serj. I arrest you, at the suit of my lady Cheatly, in an action of ten thousand pounds.

Stew. O vile woman !

Lady Cheat. Away with him !

2nd Cit. Away with him !

All. Away with the rogue !

Lump. I do beseech your pardon, sister. I was mistaken, which I do not use to be ; yet that trick at the Play-house was base.

Lady Cheat. I could not help it ; I knew not of it.

Enter two Creditors.

1st Cred. Madam, you have undone us ; you gave us bonds for two hundred pound a-piece, about six weeks since, and we have nothing but the seals left.

2nd Cred. All the ink is worn out ; behold here, madam ! [Shows a paper.]

Lady Cheat. Impostors ! lying rogues ! I owe you nothing.

Lump. These are instruments of this rascally steward's ; how come they by the seal ?

Lady Cheat. From the steward.

1st Cred. Are ye all mad ! We had it from you, for which you had two hundred pounds a-piece from us.

Prig. Out, you impudent rogue ! Get you gone !

1st Cit. Away, lying fellows !

Lump. Begone, ye vipers ! [They thrust them out.]

Lady Cheat. Now, gentlemen, I desire you that remain to take part of a collation with me, and I will show all the evidences of my estate to you. [Exeunt.]

Enter ISABELLA and BELLAMOUR.

Isab. There can be no defence ; to suspect me, and

Bell. Jealousy, like the small-pox, if it comes out kindly, is never mortal ; and my love will be the stronger, and the more vigorous, for this short distemper.

Isab. It may relapse again.

Bell. 'Tis past all danger now.

Isab. And will you still give a thousand pounds down, and three hundred pounds a year, for this tenement, notwithstanding the incumbrance of Selfish upon it ?

Bell. When I made these offers I did not know half your worth : I was a fair chapman for your beauty ; but your virtue, and other perfections, are inestimable.

Isab. And shall I flaunt it in the Park with my grey Flanders ? crowd the walk with my equipage, and be the envy of all the butterflies in town ?

Bell. Forget that vain discourse, as I have done, and take me and all I have for ever.

Isab. Sure a man of your wit will never marry ; every rich fool can get a woman that way.

Bell. Do not insult, but take me quickly to your mercy.

Isab. I'll not deceive you ; whatever show my mother makes, I have no portion, nor was ever troubled at the thought of it till now.

Bell. I am glad of it ; for now my love will be the more easily believed, and better taken.

Isab. No, Bellamour.

Bell. How, madam !

Isab. No, I say ; for were I Queen of Europe, your love would be as well accepted as 'tis now.

Bell. You surprise me with an honour too great to bear.

Enter Lady CHEATLY.

Lady Cheat. What ? are you agreed yet ? She is a foolish girl, sir, and looks as high as better women.

Bell. She's very humble, and is pleased to accept of me for a husband, and there wants only your consent, and

Lady Cheat. You honour our family, and cannot doubt of my consent: she is yours.

Enter Lady BUSY, YOUNG MAGGOT, *and* GARTRUDE.

Lady Busy. I present you here with a son and daughter; I saw 'em married: give 'em your blessing.

Lady Cheat. Heaven bless you! Madam, I can never thank you enough; you have made me happy in removing my greatest affliction.

Enter SELFISH *and* STANMORE.

Lady Busy. I love to put lovers together: virtuous actions reward themselves.

Stan. Young Maggot married! Give you joy, sir; your love to wit and beauty is at length rewarded.

Y. Mag. I will now keep company with none but the top-wits, and write plays, songs, and lampoons, in defiance of the fop my uncle.

Lady Busy. Not so fast: get him to settle first.

Lady Cheat. I'll call my brother, and the rest of my company, to be witnesses to my happiness.

[*Exit* Lady CHEATLY.]

Sel. Pretty mistress! you look to-day like a delicate picture, and Young Maggot your foil.

Gart. I vow you court me so genteelly, I shall die to part with you. I cried in the church, that I did, and had liked to have spoiled all.

Sel. But will you promise me a meeting?

Y. Mag. Stand off: she's mine.

Sel. You are to have her ever after; methinks you should allow her one day to take leave of her friends.

Enter Lady CHEATLY, LUMP, MAGGOT, PRIG, &c.

Y. Mag. Uncle, your unkindness has made me look about me, and Heaven has blest my wit and poetry with a rich wife here, Mistress Gartrude: I won her by

well as my own : thou art a mettled lad, and I like thy humour well ; give me a Phyllis with ten thousand pounds. I could sing one of thy own songs myself, I am so taken with this match.

Y. Mag. I hope then you'll settle your estate, as you always promised, if I married to your liking.

Mag. If I have no children by my dear wife, her mother, here.

Prig. Lady Cheatly your wife ! She has promised me marriage.

Mag. Whate'er she has promised you, she has performed marriage with me this morning. Be gone, rook ! they stay for thee at the twelvepenny ordinary.

Prig. What say you, madam ?

Lady Cheat. 'Tis very true.

Prig. Then you are very false.

Mag. As your dice, gamester : I'll hold you cock-pit lay, ten pound to a crown, she's bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.

Lady Cheat. This is the gentleman I'll live and die with.

Prig. Death and hell ! I'll declare all I know.

Lady Cheat. You will declare yourself a perjured knave if you do. Hark here. [*Aside.*

Mag. What do they whisper for ?

Lady Cheat. All the Steward says is true. I am worth little or nothing, my whole fortune a cheat ; this old gentleman I chose because he is governable, and loves business, of which my broken fortune will give him enough.

Prig. What a cross-bite have I 'scaped ! This sham was well carried on, madam. Did you hear, old fool ?

Mag. Oons ! I am cheated, undone, and my nephew ruined, and married to a beggar.

Y. Mag. I must e'en write hard for the Play-house ; I may get the reversion of the Poet Laureate's place. I

Prig. Well, I'll go to Newmarket, and never have to do with a two-legged jade more: I shall rook, and go to twelve, let what will come on't.

Mag. Since she has no fortune, I shall have no business neither.

Y. Mag. None but that which I am afraid you can't do, uncle.

Mag. Is this a time for wit, you rascal, when we are both undone?

[He beats Young MAGGOTT'S peruke off: from under it drop several copies of verses.]

Stan. A muss! a muss! A copy of verses upon a flea, presented to his mistress, in a gold chain.

O happy flea! that may'st both kiss and bite,
Like lovers in their height of appetite,
Her neck so white;
Pretty black alderman in golden chain,
Who suck'st her blood, and putt'st her to no pain;
Whilst I in vain, &c.

Mag. What would become of the writing coxcombs if it were not for the reading ones! I'll hear no more.

Lady Cheat. If you will go on and maintain what I have done, I shall have a good estate yet, though it belongs of right to other people.

Mag. Right! 'Tis no matter for right: I'll show 'em law.

Theod. The plague of marriage rages in this house; let us fly from the infection.

Car. I am so far gone, 'tis to no purpose to remove. Well, if you continue to be so unkind you will ruin my soul, body, and estate.

Theod. How so?

Car. Why, I can never marry any other; and in despair of you, I shall turn the most debauched whoring

be able to sleep without my three bottles and a fresh woman every night.

Isab. 'Tis an act of charity to redeem him.

Theod. The devil seldom loses anything by matrimony ; they most commonly grow worse for't.

Car. I will lead a solid, sober, husbandly life if you will marry me : if not, whoring and drinking will ensue.

Isab. Nay, now I must judge against you : you have lost your wager, and you must pay it ; you have confessed to me you loved him infinitely.

Theod. Believe her not ; I deny it.

Car. Though I distrust myself, I must believe my fair judge ; I will have a canonical bum-bailiff, and arrest you upon execution.

Theod. I will have a month's time ; you shall be so long a probationer before you enter into the order.

Car. In hopes of your good nature I will press no farther at this time. Now you, that have reached at your inn of matrimony, will pray for us travellers upon the road.

Stan. So, gentlemen, we have lost ye ; ye are not men of this world. Now make much of your matrimonial bonds ; I am glad I have done my business without 'em.

Sel. Ladies are so kind to me, I need never marry one for the matter. Well, I will go home, and put on a very delicate, neat, convenient suit, to dance with the brides in here.

Lump. I give you all joy. You see, sister, how things prosper when godly men are the instruments ! I say to all, to all of you I say,

Be godly, observe method, and be wise.

Car. Most excellent means to cover cheats and lies !





EPILOGUE.

By the Author.

IN troubled times, like these—the ancients chose
T' exhibit feasts, and plays, and public shows ;
By such diversions to allay men's fears,
Compose their minds, and mollify their cares :
If they did well then ; now your mirth to raise,
Were of such merit, you th' attempt should praise,
But 'tis a task too hard for comedy,
Which ne'er again expects good days to see.
The num'rous herd of fops and knaves arise,
Such as to poets should be lawful prize,
Whom they, like magistrates, ought to chastise :
Th' embargoes lay on wit, and stop our trading,
If noted knaves or coxcombs be the lading.
But this proceeding would be too severe ;
Whom the town scorns, sure we may laugh at here,
All prodigies to public marts should come,
Heav'n made not coxcombs for a private room,
If sullen fools would make no sport to th' nation,
We lose the only use of their creation :
If such be drawn unlike, we punish none ;
And if too like, some fops those persons own.
Our poet therefore sale-work habits makes,
But of particular men no measure takes.
Variety of garments we expose ;
For wits, for knaves, for fools, all sorts of clothes.
If any want that honesty, or wit,
To think our fools or knaves their persons hit.



THE SQUIRE OF ALSATIA.





SOMETHING has been said of this lively Play, and of its literary interest, in the general Introduction. It will be seen that Shadwell expresses himself well satisfied with its reception (1688); and though his favour with the rising Whig party may have had something to do with this, it was not undeserved. The old, old business of the Terentian *Adelphi* is no doubt worked rather hard, and, as is too often the case with Shadwell, it is impossible to take the slightest interest in the female characters. Except that the younger is neither a fool, nor a clown, nor a coward, there is not so very much to choose between the two brothers Belfond. But the *Alsatia* scenes are so lively and bustling, and the whole goes along so trippingly, that an audience (of the time, of course) would have been hard to please who had not liked it. Even the dialogue is smarter and more pointed than is Shadwell's wont. The scene-division, of which there is practically none in the original, is, as often in these plays, rather problematical.



AN EXPLANATION OF THE CANT.

Alsatia. Whitefriars.

Prig, Prigster. Pert coxcombs.

Bubble, Caravan. The cheated.

Sealer. One that gives bond and judgment for goods and money.

A Put. One who is easily wheedled and cheated.

Cole, Ready, Rhino, Darby. Ready-money.

Rhinocercical. Full of money.

Megs. Guineas.

Smells. Half-guineas.

Decus. A crown-piece.

George. A half-crown.

Hog. A shilling.

Sice. Sixpence.

Scout. A watch.

Tatter. An alarum, or striking watch.

Famble. A ring.

Poker, Tilter. A sword.

A Rum Nab. A good beaver.

Rigging. Clothes.

Blowen,^s Natural, Convenient, Tackle, Bullock, Pure, Purest pure. Several names for a mistress, or rather a whore.

To Equip. To furnish one.

A Bolter of Whitefriars. One that does but peep out of Whitefriars, and retire again, like a rabbit out of his hole.

To lug out. To draw a sword.

To scamper, to rub, to scour. To run away.

Boosy. Drunk.

Clear. Very drunk.

Smoky. Jealous.

Sharp. Subtile.

A Sharper. A cheat.

A Tat-Monger. A cheat at dice.

Tatts. False dice.

The Doctor. A particular false die, which will run but two or three chances.

Prog. Meat.

^s Shadwell, as indeed do most old writers, spells this word



To the Earl of
DORSET AND MIDDLESEX, &c.

MY LORD,



having had the honour to have lived so many years in your lordship's favour, and to have been always exceedingly obliged by your lordship, ought to be glad of an opportunity of publishing my gratitude. And the offering of this comedy to your lordship may not perhaps be thought an improper occasion of doing it: for the first Act of it was written at Copt Hall;¹ and your lordship's approbation of it (whose wit and judgment have ever been unquestioned) encouraged and inspired me to go on. When I had finished it (which was in a month's time) your lordship, upon the perusal of the whole, was pleased to say that you thought it a true and diverting comedy.

This, I must confess, made me hope for success upon the stage; which it met with, but so great, as was above my expectation (in this age which has run mad after farces), no comedy, for these many years, having filled the theatre so long together. And I had the great honour to find so many friends, that the house was never so full since it was built, as upon the third day of this Play; and vast numbers went away that could not be admitted.

This extraordinary success the more emboldens me to lay the Play at your lordship's feet, in whose service I should be glad to employ my whole life.

I shall not, according to the custom of Dedications, make a long panegyric to your lordship; 'tis superfluous and impertinent to praise him whom all men speak well of, and of whom I never heard any man speak ill. Your lordship is the favourite of mankind; and you deserve to be so, for you are ever obliging.

and seeking out occasions of doing good, and exerting your charity and generosity, in which you never lose a day.

I must acknowledge myself infinitely obliged to your lordship every way; but particularly, that I have the freedom of being received as one of your family at Copt Hall; where not only the excellence of the air, and regularity of living contribute to my health, but I have the honour of enjoying the conversation which in all the world I would choose.

It is to me, and it must be to all who wish your lordship well, an extraordinary satisfaction to observe that you have laid so certain a foundation of solid happiness for all the remaining part of your life, in retiring from all the unsatisfying pleasures and noisy troubles of the town, to so sweet a place, with so admirable a lady, who in beauty is exceeded by none, and has all those qualities of mind besides, which serve to make an excellent lady an extraordinary governess of a family, and an incomparable wife; whose fruitfulness is like to bless your lordship with a beauteous, noble, and numerous issue. And may your lordship and she long enjoy one another, and all the blessings you yourselves can imagine or desire. I am,

My lord,

Your Lordship's

Most humble servant,

THO. SHADWELL.





PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. MOUNTFORT.

How have we, in the space of one poor age,
Beheld the rise and downfall of the stage !
When, with our King restored, it first arose,
They did each day some good old play expose ;
And then it flourished, till, with manna tired,
For wholesome food the nauseous trash desired.
Then rose the whiffing scribblers of those days,
Who since have lived to bury all their plays :
And had their issue full as numerous been
As Priam's, they the fate of all had seen.

With what prodigious scarcity of wit
Did the new authors starve the hungry pit !
Infected by the French, you must have rhyme,
Which long, to please the ladies' ears, did chime.
Soon after this came ranting fustian in,
And none but plays upon the fret were seen :
Such roaring bombast stuff, which fops would praise,
'Tore our best actors' lungs, cut short their days,
Some in small time did this distemper kill ;
And had the savage authors gone on still,
Fustian had been a new disease i' th' bill.
When Time, which all things tries, had laid rhyme dead,
The vile usurper, Farce, reigned in its stead.
Then came machines, brought from a neighbour
nation ;

If all this stuff has not quite spoiled your taste,
Pray let a Comedy once more be graced :
Which does not monsters represent, but men,
Conforming to the rules of Master Ben.
Our author, ever having him in view,
At humble distance would his steps pursue.
He to correct, and to inform, did write :
If poets aim at nought but to delight,
Fiddlers have to the bays an equal right.

Our poet found your gentle fathers kind,
And now some of his works your favour find.
He'll treat you still with somewhat that is new,
But whether good or bad he leaves to you.
Baudy the nicest ladies need not fear ;
The quickest fancy shall extract none here.
We will not make 'em blush, by which is shown
How much their bought red differs from their own.
No fop, no beau, shall just exceptions make ;
None but abandoned knaves offence shall take :
Such knaves as he industriously offends,
And should be very loth to have his friends.
For you, who bring good humour to the Play,
We'll do our best to make you laugh to-day.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR WILLIAM BELFOND, a Gentleman of above £3,000 per annum, who in his youth had been a spark of the town, but married and retired into the country, where he turned to the other extreme, rigid and morose, most sordidly covetous, clownish, obstinate, positive, and froward.

Mr. Leigh.

SIR EDWARD BELFOND, his Brother, a merchant, who by lucky hits had gotten a great estate, lives single, with ease and pleasure, reasonably and virtuously. A man of great humanity and gentleness and compassion towards mankind; well read in good books, possessed with all gentleman-like qualities.

Mr. Griffin.

BELFOND, SENIOR, eldest Son to SIR WILLIAM; bred after his father's rustic, swinish manner, with great rigour and severity; upon whom his father's estate is entailed; the confidence of which makes him break out into open rebellion to his father, and become lewd, abominably vicious, stubborn, and obstinate.

Mr. Feven.

BELFOND, JUNIOR, second Son to SIR WILLIAM; adopted by Sir EDWARD, and bred from his childhood by him, with all the tenderness, and familiarity, and bounty, and liberty that can be, instructed in all the liberal sciences, and in all gentlemanlike education. Somewhat given to women, and now and then to good fellowship, but an ingenious, well-accomplished gentleman: a man of honour, and of

Mr. Mountford.

- TRUMAN, his friend, a man of honour and fortune. } *Mr. Bowman.*
- CHEATLY, a rascal, who by reason of debts dares not stir out of Whitefriars, but there inveigles young heirs in tail, and helps them to goods and money upon great disadvantages ; is bound for them, and shares with them, till he undoes them. A lewd, impudent, debauched fellow, very expert in the cant about the town. } *Mr. Sanford.*
- SHAMWELL, cousin to the BELFONDS, an heir, who being ruined by CHEATLY, is made a decoy-duck for others ; not daring to stir out of Alsatia, where he lives. Is bound with CHEATLY for heirs, and lives upon them a dissolute, debauched life. } *Mr. Powell, Jun.*
- CAPTAIN HACKUM, a blockheaded bully of Alsatia ; a cowardly, impudent, blustering fellow ; formerly a sergeant in Flanders, run from his colours, retreated into Whitefriars for a very small debt, where, by the Alsatians, he is dubbed a captain ; marries one that lets lodgings, sells cherry brandy, and is a bawd. } *Mr. Bright.*
- SCRAPEALL, a hypocritical, repeating, praying, psalm-singing, precise fellow, pretending to great piety, a godly knave, who joins with CHEATLY, and supplies young heirs with goods and money. } *Mr. Freeman.*
- Attorney to SIR WILLIAM BELFOND, who solicits his business, and receives all his packets. } *Mr. Powell, Sen.*
- LOLPOOP, a North-country fellow, servant to BELFOND, SENIOR, much } *Mr. Hinderhill*

- TERMAGANT, a sharper, brother to MRS. }
 TERMAGANT. } *Mr. Alexander.*
- LA MAR, a French valet de chambre.
- ROGER, servant to BELFOND, JUNIOR.¹
- PARSON, an indebted Alsatian divine.
- Fidlers, Constables, Tipstaff, Watch, Sergeant, Musketeers,
 Rabble, &c.
- RUTH, a precise Governess to TERESIA }
 and ISABELLA. } *Mrs. Cory.*
- TERESIA, Daughter to SCRAPEALL, in love }
 with, and beloved by, TRUMAN. } *Mrs. Knight.*
- ISABELLA, his Niece, in love with, and }
 beloved by BELFOND, JUNIOR. } *Mrs. Mountford.*
- LUCIA, the Attorney's Daughter, a young }
 beautiful girl, of a mild and tender }
 disposition; debauched by BEL- }
 FOND, JUNIOR. } *Mrs. Bracegirdle.*
- MRS. TERMAGANT, a neglected mistress }
 of BELFOND, JUNIOR, by whom he }
 has had a child: a furious, malicious, }
 and revengeful woman; perpetually }
 plaguing him, and crossing him in }
 all his designs; pursuing him con- }
 tinually with her malice, even to the }
 attempting of his life. } *Mrs. Bowtell.*
- MRS. HACKUM, Wife to Captain }
 HACKUM. }
- MRS. BETTY, LOLPOOP's whore.
- MRS. MARGARET, his master's whore.

¹ He appears to be Sir WILLIAM's servant, see p. 55. But he does not appear in the *Dramatis Personæ* of Ed. I., and speaks only once (p. 65) or twice (p. 77).



THE SQUIRE OF ALSATIA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*Enter BELFOND SENIOR, meeting SHAMWELL.*



BELF. SEN. Cousin Shamwell, well met; good morrow to you.

Sham. Cousin Belfond, your humble servant: what makes you abroad so early? 'Tis not much past seven.

Belf. Sen. You know we were boosy last night; I am a little hot-headed this morning and come to take the fresh air here in the Temple Walks.

Sham. Well, and what do you think of our way of living here? Is not rich, generous wine better than your poor hedge-wine stummed, or dull March beer? Are not delicate, well-bred, well-dressed women better than dairymaids, tenant's daughters, or barefoot strumpets? Streets full of fine coaches, better than a yard full of dung-carts? A magnificent tavern than a thatched ale-house? Or the society of brave, honest, witty, merry fellows, than the conversation of unthinking, hunting, hawking blockheads, or high-shoed peasants and their wiser cattle?

never have thought there had been such a gallant place as London. Here I can be drunk over-night, and well next morning: can ride in a coach for a shilling as good as a Deputy-Lieutenant's; and such merry wags and ingenious companions! Well, I vow and swear, I am mightily beholding to you, dear cousin Shamwell. 'Then for the women! Mercy upon us! so civil and well-bred; and, I'll swear upon a Bible, finer all of them than knight-baronets' wives with us.

Sham. And so kind and pleasant!

Belf. Sen. Ay, I vow, pretty rogues! No pride in them in the world; but so courteous and familiar, as I'm an honest man, they'll do whatever one would have them presently. Ah, sweet rogues! While in the country a pize take them! there's such a stir with "Pish, fie, nay, Mr. Timothy, what do you do? I vow I'll squeak, never stir, I'll call out;" ah, ha.

Sham. And if one of them happen to be with child, there's straight an uproar in the country, as if the hundred were sued for a robbery!

Belf. Sen. Ay, so there is; and I am in that fear of my father besides, adad, he'd knock me i' th' head, if he should hear of such a thing. To say truth, he's so terrible to me, I can never enjoy myself for him. Lord! What will he say when he comes to know I am at London? Which he in all his lifetime would never suffer me to see, for fear I should be debauched forsooth! and allows me little or no money at home neither.

Sham. What matter what he says? Is not every foot of the estate entailed upon you?

Belf. Sen. Well, I'll endure't no longer! If I can but raise money, I'll teach him to use his son like a dog, I'll warrant him.

Sham. You can ne'er want that. Take up on the reversion, 'tis a lusty one; and Cheatly will help you to the ready; and thou shalt shine, and be as gay as any

Belf. Sen. Well, adad, you are pleasant men, and have the neatest sayings with you ; “ready,” and “spruce prig,” and abundance of the prettiest witty words. But sure that Mr. Cheatly is as fine a gentleman as any wears a head, and as ingenious, ne’er stir, I believe he would run down the best scholar in Oxford, and put ’em in a mouse-hole with his wit.

Sham. In Oxford ! Ay, and in London too !

Belf. Sen. Godsookers, cousin ! I always thought they had been wittiest in the Universities.

Sham. O, fie, cousin ; a company of puts, mere puts !

Belf. Sen. Puts ! mere puts ! very good, I’ll swear ; ha, ha, ha !

Sham. They are all scholar-boys, and nothing else, as long as they live there ; and yet they are as confident as if they knew everything, when they understand no more beyond Magdalen Bridge than mere Indians. But Cheatly is a rare fellow : I’ll speak a bold word, he shall cut a sham or banter with the best wit or poet of ’em all.

Belf. Sen. Good again : “Cut a sham or banter !” I shall remember all these quaint words in time. But Mr. Cheatly’s a prodigy, that’s certain.

Sham. He is so ; and a worthy, brave fellow, and the best friend, where he takes, and the most sincere of any man breathing.

Belf. Sen. Nay, I must needs say, I have found him very frank, and very much a gentleman ; and am most extremely obliged to him and you for your great kindness.

Sham. This morning your clothes and liveries will come home, and thou shalt appear rich and splendid like thyself, and the mobile shall worship thee.

Belf. Sen. The “mobile” !⁴ That’s pretty.

Enter CHEATLY.

Sweet Mr. Cheatly ! My best friend ! Let me embrace thee.

⁴ The original, it is perhaps not impertinent to remind the

Cheat. My sprightly son of timber and of acres ! My noble heir, I salute thee. The coal is coming, and shall be brought in this morning.

Belf. Sen. Coal ? Why, 'tis summer, I need no firing now. Besides, I intend to burn billets.

Cheat. My lusty rustic, learn, and be instructed. Coal is, in the language of the witty, money ; the ready, the rhino. Thou shalt be rhinocerical, my lad, thou shalt.

Belf. Sen. Admirable, I swear ! “ Coal, ready, rhino, rhinocerical ! ” Lord, how long may a man live in ignorance in the country !

Sham. Ay ; but what asses you'll make of the country gentlemen when you go amongst them. 'Tis a Providence you are fallen into so good hands.

Belf. Sen. 'Tis a mercy, indeed. How much coal, ready, and rhino shall I have ?

Cheat. Enough to set thee up to spark it in thy brother's face ; and ere thou shalt want the ready, the darby, thou shalt make thy fruitful acres in reversion to fly, and all thy sturdy oaks to bend like switches ! But thou must squeeze, my lad : squeeze hard, and seal, my bully. Shamwell and I are to be bound with thee.

Belf. Sen. I am mightily beholden to you both, I vow and swear. My uncle, Sir Edward, took my brother when he was a child, and adopted him. Would it had been my lot !

Sham. He is a noble gentleman, and maintains him in coach and equipage fit for him.

Cheat. Thou shalt not see the prig thy brother till thou shalt out-jingle him in ready, outshine him in thy ornaments of body, out-spark' him in thy coach and liveries ; and shalt be so equipped that thou shalt dazzle the whole town with thy outrageous splendour.

Belf. Sen. I vow his tongue is rarely hung !

Cheat. Thy brother's heart shall break with envy at

thy brightness. What ogling there will be between thee and the blowens! old staring at thy equipage! And every buttock shall fall down before thee!

Belf. Sen. Ha, ha, ha! I vow, you are the pleasantest man I ever met with, and I'll swear the best friend I ever had in life; that I must needs say. I was resolved not to let my brother see me till I was in circumstances, d'ye see. And, for my father, he's in Holland. My mother's brother died, and left him sole executor. He'll not be here these six weeks.

Sham. Well, when you see your brother he'll envy you, and rail at those who made you flourish so. We shall be cast off.

Belf. Sen. Gudzookers, cousin! I take it very unkindly that you should say so. I'll cast off all the relations in the world, before I'll part with such true, such loving friends, adad.

Enter CAPTAIN HACKUM.

Oh, noble Captain Hackum, your servant; servant, Captain.

Hack. Your humble trout, good noble squire; you were brave and boosy last night, i'faith you were!

Belf. Sen. Yes, really, I was clear: for I do not remember what I did, or where I was. Clear, clear, is not that right?

Sham. Ay, ay: why you broke windows; scoured; broke open a house in Dorset Court, and took a pretty wench, a gentleman's natural, away by force.

Cheat. Very true; and this magnanimous spark, this thunderbolt of war, Captain Hackum, laid about him like a hero; as did some other of your friends, or else the watch had mauled us. But we made them scour.

Belf. Sen. Nay, o' my conscience, the captain's mighty valiant; there's terror in that countenance and whiskers: he is a very Scanderberg incarnate. And now you put

shoulders are plaguy sore, and my arms black and blue. But where's the wench, the natural, ha, captain?

Hack. Ah, squire, I led her off. I have her safe for you.

Belf. Sen. But does not the gallant thunder and roar for her?

Hack. The scoundrel dares not: he knows me, who never knew fear in my life. For my part, I love magnanimity and honour, and those things; and fighting is one of my recreations.

He that wears a brave soul, and dares honestly do.
Is a herald to himself, and a godfather too.

Belf. Sen. O brave captain!

Cheat. The prigster lugged out in defence of his natural, the captain whipped his porker out, and away rubbed prigster and called the watch.

Belf. Sen. "Prigster lugged out, natural, porker, rubbed"—admirable! This is very ingenious conversation; you're the purest company! Who would not keep company with the wits? Pox o' the country, I say!

Hack. But, squire, I had damnable ill luck afterwards. I went up to the gaming ordinary, and lost all my ready, they left me not a rag or sock. Pox o' the tatts, for me! I believe, they put the doctor upon me.

Belf. Sen. Tatts, and doctor! What's that?

Sham. The tools of sharpers—false dice.

Hack. Hark you; prithee, noble squire, equip me with a couple of megs, or two couple of smelts.

Belf. Sen. "Smelts!" What, shall we bespeak another dish of fish for our dinner?

Sham. No, no; megs are guineas; smelts are half-guineas: He would borrow a couple of guineas.

Belf. Sen. "Megs, smelts!" Ha, ha, ha! Very pretty, by my troth. And so thou shalt, dear captain: there are two megs: and, I vow and swear, I am glad I

Hack. You are so honest a gentleman, quarrel every day, and I'll be your second ; once a day at least. And I'll say this for you, there's not a finer gentleman this day walks the Friars ; no dispraise to any man, let him be what he will.

Belf. Sen. Adad, you make me proud, sir.

Enter LOLPOOP.

Oh, Lolpoop ! where have you been all this morning, sirrah ?

Lolp. Why, 'tis but rear,¹ marry ; 'tis meet a bit past eight. By'r lady, yeow were so sow drunken last neeght I had thoughten yeow wouden ha been a bed aw th' morn. Well, mine eyne ake a gazing up and down on aw' the fine sights ; but for aw that, send me north to my own county again.

Belf. Sen. Oh, silly rogue ! you are only fit for cattle. Gentlemen, you must excuse him, he knows no better.

Lolp. Marry, better, quotha ! By th' mess, this is a life for a deel. To be drunken each night, break windows, roar, sing, and swear i' th' streets ; go to logger-heads with the constable and the watch, han harlots in gold and silver lace ! Hea'n bless us ! and send me a whome again.

Belf. Sen. Peace, you saucy scoundrel, or I'll cudgel you to pap. Sirrah, do not provoke me, I say, do not.

Lolp. Ods-flesh, where is money for aw this ? Yeowst be run agraunt soon, and you takken this caurse. Ise tell a that.

Belf. Sen. Take that, sirrah : I'll teach you to mutter. What ! my man become my master ?

Lolp. Waunds ! Give me ten times more, and send

¹ It is probably unnecessary to attempt exact construing of this dialect. Shadwell was fond of using *patois* of various kinds, none

of which he managed very well ; but the fashion had been set long

me whome agen at after. What will awd maaster say to this? I mun ne'er see the face of him, I wot.

Sham. Hang him, a rogue! Toss him in a blanket.

Cheat. Let me talk with him a little. Come on, fellow.

Lolp. Talk! Well, what sen ye?

Cheat [*bantering*]. Your master being in this matter, to deport his count'nance somewhat obliquely, to some principles, which others but out of a mature gravity may have weighed, and think too heavy to be undertaken; what does it avail you if you shall precipitate or plunge yourself into affairs, as unsuitable to your physnomy as they are to your complexion.

Lolp. Hah, what sen yeow? Yeow mistaken me: I am not book-learned; I understand a not.

Cheat. No 'tis the strangest thing! Why, put the case you are indebted to me £20 upon a *scire facias*; I extend this up to an outlawry, upon affidavit upon the *nisi prius*; I plead to all this matter *non est inventus* upon the panel. What is there to be done more in this case, as it lies before the Bench, but to award out execution upon the *posse comitatus*, who are presently to issue out a *certiorari*?

Lolp. I understand a little of sizes, nisi-prizes, affidavi, suffurari! But, by the mess, I cannot tell what to mack of aw this together, not I.

Belf. Sen. Ha, ha! Puppy! Owl! Loggerhead! O silly country put! Here's a prig indeed! He'll ne'er find out what 'tis to cut a sham, or banter. Well, I swear, sir, you do it the best of any man in the world.

Cheat. No, no, I swear, not I.

Belf. Sen. I protest, you do it incomparably.

Cheat. Nay, now you compliment. 'Faith, you make me blush.

Lolp. Sham and banter are heathen Greek to me. But yeow have cut out fine wark for yourself last neeght

windows are pood down. I asked what was the matter, and by the mass they haw learnt your nam too; they saiden Squire Belfond had done it, and ravished a wench: and that they hadden gotten the Lord Chief Justice Warren for you, and wooden bring a pawr of actions against yeow.

Belf. Sen. Is this true?

Lolp. Ay, by th' mass.

Cheat. No matter; we'll bring you off with a wet finger; trust me for that.

Belf. Sen. Dear friend, I rely upon you for everything.

Sham. We value not twenty such things of a rush.

Hack. If any of their officers dare invade our privileges, we'll send 'em to hell without bail or main-prize.

Lolp. But I can tell a wor news than aw this! I ne'er saw flesh alive, an I saw not your father's man Roger come out o' th' Temple gate e'en now. Your father's in town, that's certain.

Belf. Sen. How! my father, say you? 'Tis impossible.

Cheat. Courage, my heir in tail: thy father's a poor sneaking tenant for life; thou shalt live better than he can. And if we do contract a debt upon thy dirty acres in the north, I have designed for you a fine young lady with a swinging fortune, to redeem all; and 'tis impossible, my lad to miss her.

Belf. Sen. Sir, let me embrace you, and love you, never man embraced a better friend! *Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur*, as the saying is.

Lolp. Sir, sir, let speak one word with yeow. Ods-flesh, I'll die the death of a dog, and aw these yeow seen here be not rogues, cheats, and pickpockets!

Belf. Sen. Peace, you rascal! Adad, I would not

Lolp. What is the reason they dare not stir out of this privileged place, but on Sabbath days?

Belf. Sen. You blockhead, Mr. Cheatly had an Alderman's young wife run away with him, is sued for't, and is in fear of a substantial jury of city cuckolds. Shamwell's unnatural father lays in wait for him, to apprehend him, and run him into the country. The brave and valiant gentleman, Captain Hackum, who is as stout as a lion, beat a judge's son t'other day. And now your questions are fully answered, you put, you!

Cheat. Honest Shamwell, thou art a rare fellow. Thy cousin here is the wealthiest caravan we have met with a long time; the hopefullest sealer that ever yet touched wax among us: but we must take off that evil counsellor of his.

Enter Tailor with a bundle, a peruke-maker, hatter, and shoemaker.

Sham. I warrant you.—Oh, cousin, here's your tailor, with your clothes and liveries; hatter, shoemaker, peruke-maker.

Cheat. All your movables together; go into your lodging and fit them. Your new footmen, and your French valet de chambre are there; I'll wait on you there presently.

Lolp. Odsflesh, here's whaint wark! By'r lady, this is fine! Whaw, whaw!

Belf. Sen. Get you in, you rogue; an you mutter one word more, adad I'll mince you, sirrah. Well, go in all of you. Gentlemen, I shall see you presently. [*Exit.*

Cheat. Immediately. Let us hug ourselves, my dear rascal, in this adventure; you have done very well to engage him last night in an outrage; and we must take care to put him upon all the expense we can. We must reduce him to have as much need of us as possible.

Sham. Thou art i'th' right. But, captain, where's the

Hack. Why, at my house ; my wife has brought her into a good humour. She is very pretty ; and is now pleased to think the Squire will be a better keeper than her former, for he was but a sharper, a tatmonger, and when he wanted money would kick and beat her most immoderately.

Sham. Well, I'll say that for the captain's wife, she's as good an able discreet woman to carry on an intrigue, as e'er a woman in the Friars. Nay, better.

Hack. Your servant, good Mr. Shamwell ; she's a very good woman, thanks be to Heaven ? I have great comfort in her ; she has a cup of the best cherry-brandy in the Friars.

Sham. [*aside.*] And commonly a good whore to boot. But prithee, captain, go home, and let her and the young girl prepare to dine with us ; we must have a great dinner, and fiddlers at the "George," to season the squire in his new equipage.

Hack. Well, well, it shall be done. [*Exit.*

Sham. You'll find this fellow a necessary tool in consort with his wife, who is, indeed, a bawd of parts. He is a good ruffian enough : for though he be not stout, he's impudent, and will roar and keep a filthy pother, which is enough to make fools believe he's stout.

Cheat. Let him and the small fry pick up the squire's loose crumbs, while we share in the lusty sums.

Enter SCRAPEALL.

Oh, here comes Mr. Scrapeall, with all his zeal ; our godly accomplice in all designs ; leave him to me.

[*Exit SHAMWELL.*

Oh, Mr. Scrapeall ! Have you brought the money for the Squire ?

Scrap. I come to tell you that my man approacheth with the money and the goods for your Squire.

Cheat. I hope you have not burdened him with too

Scrap. No ; but a fourth part. 'Tis true, the goods are somewhat stale, but I will take them off at small under rates. You know, I am not seen in furnishing of the goods and money, but only in the buying of the goods. My lawyer accompanieth my man to testify the writings.

Cheat. 'Tis as it should be. He's a fat Squire ; the estate in tail is full £3,000 a year. He will yield well.

Scrap. [*aside.*] The Squire is to take to wife a niece I have in charge. His father is to give me £5,000 out of her fortune, and the Squire's lewdness and prodigality will soon let me deep into his reversion. Besides, his lighting into these hands will make his father, when he finds it, hasten to agree with me for his redemption. I like the business well. I am going to the man you call Crump, who helpeth solicitors to affidavit men, and swearers, and bail.

Cheat. His office is next door ; his wardrobe for bail and witnesses. Here he comes ; let's meet him.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter SIR WILLIAM BELFOND *and an* Attorney.

Sir Will. Sure I should know the face of that fellow that's going there into Whitefriars.

Att. 'Tis a notorious one : you have seen him often ; 'tis that most audacious rogue, Cheatly, who has drawn in so many young heirs, and undone so many sealers. He is a bolter of Whitefriars.

Sir Will. It is that villain !

Att. I am very glad, sir, you have dispatched your business so soon in Holland.

Sir Will. I had great success, and finished all, six weeks at least ere I expected ; and had time to come by the way of Flanders, and see that country, which I desired. And from Newport I came to Dover ; and riding post from thence, I took a boat at Southwark,

troubled you had sent my packet to Holland ere I came.

Att. I received none from you of late. No packet has arrived this fortnight from Holland.

Sir Will. Have you heard no news from my son, nor my steward in the country?

Att. Not these ten or twelve days.

Sir Will. That son is all the joy of my life ; for him I hurry up and down, take pains, spare, and live hard to raise his fortune.

Att. Indeed, I hear he's a fine gentleman, and understands his country affairs as well as any farmer of them all.

Sir Will. I must confess he proves after my own heart. He's a solid young man, a dutiful child as ever man had, and I think I have done well for him in providing him a wife with such a fortune, which he yet knows nothing of. But will not this godly man, this Mr. Scrapeall, take a farthing less, say you, for his niece?

Att. Not a sowce. I higgled with him as if I were to buy of a horse-courser, and he will not take a farthing less than £5,000 for his niece.

Sir Will. He's a strange mixture, a perpetual sermon-hunter, repeats and sing psalms continually, and prays so loud and vehemently, that he is a disturbance to his neighbours. He is so heavenward pious, and seems a very saint of a scrivener.

Att. He finds the sweet of that ; it gets him many a good trust and executorship.

Sir Will. Pox on him for a damned godly knave, forsooth ! Cannot he be contented to sell her, whom his own brother committed to his charge, but he must extort so much for her ? Well, I must agree with him ; I know she has full £20,000 left her, and has been brought up as strictly as my son. Get writings ready ; I'll send post for my son Timothy this day.

Att. They are ready ; you may seal in the afternoon,

Sir Will. And I will then. I'll detain you no longer. Get my writings ready; I am resolved to settle my other boy well. But my town-son afflicts me whenever I hear him named.

Att. Your humble servant, Sir William Belfond.

[*Exit* Attorney.]

Enter Servant to SIR WILLIAM.

Serv. Sir, I have been at your brother's house, and they say he is come to some lawyer's chamber in the King's Bench Buildings.

Sir Will. That's lucky enough. I'll walk here then, and do you watch.

Enter HACKUM and another Bully.

Who are these? Some inhabitants of Whitefriars; some bullies of Alsatia.

Hack. I was plaguy boosy last night with Squire Belfond. We had fiddles, whores, scoured, broke windows, beat watches, and roared like thunder.

Bully. Ay, I heard you.

Sir Will. What says he? [*Aside.*]

Hack. He drinks, whores, swears, sings, roars, rants, and scours with the best of us.

Sir Will. Sir, with your favour, are you acquainted with young Belfond?

Hack. Yes, that I am. What country put's this?

[*Aside.*]

Sir Will. What countryman is he, sir?

Hack. Prithee, old prigster, why dost ask? He is a northern man; he has a damned, rustic, miserable rascal to his father, who lives a nasty brutal life in the country, like a swine. But the Squire will be even with him, I'll warrant him.

Sir Will. I have something to say to him, if I could see him.

You have somewhat to say to him! I am ready to give you satisfaction. Lug out; come, you put! I'll make you scamper.

Sir Will. D'ye hear, bully rascal; put up and walk your way, or, by Heaven, I'll beat you as long as you are able to be beaten.

Bully. I'll stand by you; you may easily beat this old fellow.

Hack. No man e'er gave me such words but forfeited his life. I could whip thee through the lungs immediately; but I'll desist at present. Who the devil would have thought this put durst have drawn a sword? Well, sir, we shall take a time, sir, another time, sir.

Sir Will. You lie, you rascal; you will take no time: Here's a fine champion of my son's!

[*Exeunt HACKUM and Bully.*

Enter SIR EDWARD BELFOND.

Sir Edw. Who's this I see? My brother, Sir William Belfond! Your humble servant. You are welcome into England. I looked not for you these six weeks.

Sir Will. I landed at the Temple Stairs even now. My man has been at your house, and he heard you were here.

Sir Edw. I hope you have done your business.

Sir Will. Beyond my expectation.

Sir Edw. Has your wife's brother done by you in his will, as you would have had him?

Sir Will. Truly, yes; he has made me sole executor, and left my two sons £5,000 apiece, to be paid at each of their days of marriage, or at my death.

Sir Edw. Well, brother, you are a happy man; for wealth flows in upon you on every side, and riches you account the greatest happiness.

Sir Will. I find that wealth alone will not make me happy. Ah, brother! I must confess it was a kindness

merchandise, to adopt my younger son, and take him and breed him from his childhood. But you have been so gentle to him, he is run into all manner of vice and riot; no bounds can hold him; no shame can stop him; no laws nor customs can restrain him!

Sir Edw. I am confident you are mistaken: he has as fair reputation as any gentleman about London. 'Tis true he's a good fellow, but no sot; he loves mirth and society, without drunkenness: he is, as all young fellows, I believe are, given to women; but it is in private; and he is particular: no common whore-master. And, in short, keeps as good company as any man in England.

Sir Will. Your over-weening makes you look through a false glass upon him. Company! Why he keeps company for the devil. Had you come a minute sooner you might have seen two of his companions; they were praising him for roaring, swearing, ranting, scouring, whoring, beating watches, breaking windows: I but asked one of 'em if he knew him, and said I had somewhat to say to him; the rogue the most seeming terrible of the two, told me, if I had anything to say to Squire Belfond, he would give me satisfaction.

Sir Edw. What kind of fellow?

Sir Will. He came out of Whitefriars: he's some Alsatian bully.

Sir Edw. 'Tis impossible! he never keeps such company.

Sir Will. The rogue drew upon me; bid me lug out, called me old prig, country put; and spoke a particular language which such rogues have made to themselves, called canting, as beggars, gipsies, thieves, and gaol-birds do; but I made his bullies go away very tamely at the sight of my drawn sword.

Sir Edw. I am sure he keeps no such company; it must be some other of his name.

Sir Will. You make me mad to excuse him thus.

indulgence. Besides, he throws away money like dirt; his infamy is notorious.

Sir Edw. Infamy! Nay, there you wrong him: he does no ungentleman-like things. Prithee consider youth a little. What if he does wench a little, and now and then is somewhat extravagant in wine; where's the great crime? All young fellows that have mettle in them will do the first; and if they have wit and good humour in them, in this drinking country, they will sometimes be forced upon the latter; and he must be a very dull phlegmatical lump whom wine will not elevate to some extravagance now and then.

Sir Will. Will you distract me? What, are drinking and whoring no faults? His courses will break my heart; they bring tears into my eyes so often.

Sir Edw. One would think you had been drinking and were maudlin; think what we ourselves did when we were young fellows. You were a spark, would drink, scour and wench with the best o' th' town.

Sir Will. Ay, but I soon repented, married and settled.

Sir Edw. And turned as much to the other extreme; and now, perhaps, I dislike these faults, caused by the heat of youth. But how do you know he may not be reclaimed suddenly?

Sir Will. Reclaimed? How can he be reclaimed without severity? You should cudgel him, and allow him no money; make him not dare to offend you thus. Well, I have a son whom by my strictness I have formed according to my heart: he never puts on his hat in my presence; rises at second course, takes away his plate, says grace, and saves me the charge of a chaplain. Whenever he committed a fault I mauled him with correction; I'd fain see him once dare to be extravagant. No, he's a good youth, the comfort of my age! I weep for joy to think of him. Good sir, learn to be a father of him that is one; I have a natural care of him you

Sir Edw. You are his father by nature, I by choice ; I took him when he was a child, and bred him up with gentleness, and that kind of conversation that has made him my friend. He conceals nothing from me, or denies nothing to me. Rigour makes nothing but hypocrites.

Sir Will. Perhaps, when you begin late ; but you should have been severe to him in his childhood ; abridged him of liberty and money, and have had him soundly whipped often ; he would have blessed you afterwards.

Sir Edw. Too much straitness to the minds of youths, like too much lacing to the body, will make them grow crooked.

Sir Will. But no lacing at all will make them swell and grow monsters.

Sir Edw. I must govern by love. I had as lief govern a dog as a man if it must be by fear ; this I take to be the difference between a good father to children and a harsh master over slaves.

Sir Will. Yes, and see what your government is come to ! his vice and prodigality will distract me.

Sir Edw. Why should you be so concerned ? He is mine, is he not ?

Sir Will. Yes, by adoption, but he is mine by nature.

Sir Edw. 'Tis all but custom.

Sir Will. Mine is a tender care.

Sir Edw. Your passion blinds you. I have as tender care as you can have ; I have been ever delighted with him from his childhood ; he is endeared to me by long custom and familiarity. I have had all the pleasure of a father, without the drudgery of getting a son upon a damned wife, whom, perhaps, I should wish hanged.

Sir Will. And will you let him run on in his lewdness and prodigality ?

Sir Edw. He is mine. If he offends 'tis me, if he

care? Pray take care of your own; if you will take care of this too. What, do you take him from me?

Sir Will. This you come to always. I take him from you! No, I'd not be troubled with him. Well, let him run on, and be ruined, hanged and damned, I'll never speak word more about him. Let him go on.

Sir Edw. This heat of youth will be allayed ere long, I warrant you.

Sir Will. No, no, let him go on, let him go on; I'll take care of my own at home, and happy were this rake-hell if he would take example by his brother. But I say no more, I have done; let him go on.

Sir Edw. Now you are angry! Your passion runs away with you.

Sir Will. No, no, I have done; what would you have more?

Sir Edw. Let us go and see him. I'll lay my life you'll find him perusing some good author; he ever spends his whole morning in study.

Sir Will. I must into the city, the first thing I do, and get my bills accepted; and then, if you will, we'll see him. And no doubt but we shall find him perusing of some whore or other instead of a book.

Sir Edw. I am not of your opinion: but I'll carry you in my coach into the city, and then bring you back to him. He is of so good a disposition, so much a gentleman, and has such worth and honour, that if you knew him as well as I, you'd love him as well as I do.

Sir Will. Well, well, I hear you, sir: I must send for my son post. I'll show you a son! Well, Heaven bless him! I should be weary of this wicked world, but for the comforts I find in him. Come along: I'll show you a son!

[*Exeunt.*



ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*Enter BELFOND JUNIOR and LUCIA.*



BELF. JUN. Why dost thou sigh and show such sadness in thy looks, my pretty miss?

Lucia. Have I not reason?

Belf. Jun. Dost thou dislike thy entertainment?

Lucia. Ah! cruel Belfond, thou hast undone me!

Belf. Jun. My pretty little rogue! I sooner would undo myself a thousand times.

Lucia. How I tremble to think what I ha' done! I have made myself for ever miserable!

Belf. Jun. Oh, say not so, dear child! I'll kiss those tears from off thy beauteous eyes. But I shall wrong thy cheeks, on which they fall like precious drops of dew on flowers.

Lucia. Heaven! What have I done?

Belf. Jun. No more than what thy mother did before thee; no more than thy whole sex is born to do.

Lucia. Oh! had I thought you would have been so cruel I never would have seen your face—I swear I would not.

Belf. Jun. I swear thou wouldst, I know thou wouldst. Cruel! no billing turtle e'er was kinder to his tender mate; in billing, cooing, and in gentle murmurs we

Lucia. The more unhappy fool was I. Go, go, I hate you now.

Belf. Jun. Oh, my sweet little one! thou canst not sure be so unkind; those pretty tell-tales of thy heart, thy eyes, say better things.

Lucia. Do they so? I'll be revenged on 'em for't; for they shall never see you more.

Belf. Jun. Ah! say not so; I had rather much the sun should never shine on me than thou be hidden from my sight. Thou art not sure in earnest?

Lucia. Yes, sure, I think I am.

Belf. Jun. No, my sweet love, I think thou art not.

Lucia. Oh Lord! how shall I look? How shall I bear myself? If any of my friends should fix their eyes upon me I shall look down and blush and think they know all.

Belf. Jun. How many fair ones daily do the same and look demurely as any saints?

Lucia. They are confident things, I warrant 'em.

Belf. Jun. Let love be made familiar to thee and thou wilt bear it better. Thou must see me every day. Canst thou be so hard-hearted to forbear the sight of me?

Lucia. Perhaps I may desire now and then a look, a sight of thee at some distance, but I will never venture to come near thee more, I vow.

Belf. Jun. Let me kiss that vow from off thy lips while 'tis warm there. I have it here: 'tis gone. Thou wilt not kill me, sure? Didst thou not say thou lovedst me?

Lucia. Yes, I loved too much, or this had never happened; I could not else have been undone.

Belf. Jun. Undone! Thou art made. Woman is but half a creature till she be joined to man; now thou art whole and perfect!

Lucia. Wicked man! Can I be so confident once to come near thee more?

should survive it ; and then my ghost will haunt thee. Canst thou look on me, pretty creature, and talk thus ?

Lucia. Well, go thy ways ; that flattering tongue and those bewitching eyes were made to ruin womankind.

Belf. Jun. Could I but think thou wert in earnest, these arms should clasp thee ever here ; I'd ne'er part with thee.

Lucia. No, no ; now I must be gone ; I shall be missed. How shall I get home and not be known ? Surely everybody will discover me.

Belf. Jun. Thy mask will cover all. There is a chair below in the entry to carry thee and set thee down where thou wilt.

Lucia. Farewell, dear, cruel man ! And must I come to-morrow morning, say you ? No, no.

Belf. Jun. Yes, yes ; to-morrow and to-morrow, and every morning of our lives ; I die else.

Enter a Footboy.

Foot. Sir, your singing-master is coming.

Belf. Jun. My singing-master, Mr. Solfa, is coming.

Lucia. Oh Lord, hide me ! He is my master ; he'll know me ! I shall not be able to go by him for trembling.

Belf. Jun. Pretty miss, into the closet ; I'll dispatch him soon. [LUCIA goes in.]

Enter Singing-Master and his Daughter.

Come, master, let your daughter sing the song you promised me.

Solf. Come, Betty. Please to put in a flute, sir.

Belf. Jun. Come on.

SONG with two Flutes and a Thorough-bass.

THE EXPOSTULATION.

Still wilt thou sigh, and still in vain

A cold, neglectful nymph adore ?

No longer fruitlessly complain,

But to thyself thyself restore.

In youth thou caught'st this fond disease,
And shouldst abandon it in age ;
Some other nymph as well may please,
Absence or business disengage.

On tender hearts the wounds of love,
Like those imprinted on young trees,
Or kill at first, or else they prove
Larger b' insensible degrees.
Business I tried ; she filled my mind :
On others' lips my dear I kissed ;
But never solid joy could find,
Where I my charming Sylvia missed.

Long absence, like a Greenland night,
Made me but wish for sun the more :
And that inimitable light,
She, none but she, could e'er restore.
She never once regards thy fire,
Nor ever vents one sigh for thee.
I must the glorious sun admire,
Though he can never look on me.

Look well, you'll find she's not so rare,
Much of her former beauty's gone :
My love, her shadow, larger far
Is made by her declining sun.
What if her glories faded be ?
My former wounds I must endure ;
For should the bow unbended be,
Yet that can never help the cure.

Belf. Jun. 'Tis very easy and natural. Your daughter sings delicately.

Enter TRUMAN.

Tru. Belfond, good-morrow to thee ; I see thou still
takest care to melt away thy hours in soft delights

diversions we can invent are little enough to make the farce of life go down.

Tru. And yet what a coil they keep! How busy and industrious are those who are reckoned grave and wise about this life as if there were something in it?

Belf. Jun. These fools are in earnest, and very solid; they think there's something in't, while wise men know there's nothing to be done here but to make the best of a bad market.

Tru. You are mighty philosophical this morning. But shall I not hear one song, as well as you?

Belf. Jun. Have you set that Ode in Horace?

Solfa. I have.

Belf. Jun. Then I hope you will be encouraged to set more of them; we then shall be sure of wit and music together; while you great musicians do often take most pains about the silliest words. Prithee, Truman, sing it.

Tru. [*sings*]. *Integer vitæ scelerisque purus, &c.*

[*Hor., Ode 22. l. 1.*

Belf. Jun. Very well; you have obliged me: Please to accept of this. And, madam, you shall give me leave to show my gratitude by a small present.

Solfa and Daught. Your servant, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Tru. You are so immoderately given to music, methinks it should jostle love out of your thoughts.

Belf. Jun. Oh no! Remember Shakespeare; if music be the food of love, play on—There's nothing nourishes that soft passion like it, it imp's his wings, and makes him fly a higher pitch. But prithee tell me what news of our dear mistresses? I never yet was so sincerely in love as with my pretty hypocrite: there is a fire in those eyes that strikes like lightning. What a constant churchman she has made of me!

Tru. And mine has made an entire conquest of me:

Belf. Jun. Let us not fall out like the heroes in the rehearsal, for not being in love with the same woman.

Tru. Nothing could be so fortunate as our difference in this case : the only one we disagree in.

Belf. Jun. Thou art in the right : mine has so charmed me, I am content to abandon all other pleasures, and live alone for her ; she has subdued me even to marriage.

Tru. Mine has no less vanquished me ; I'll surrender upon discretion. Ah, rogue Belfond ! I see by your bed, for all your constant love, you have had a wench this night.

Belf. Jun. Peace, peace, man ! 'Tis dangerous to fast too long for fear of losing an appetite quite.

Tru. You are a sincere honest lover indeed !

Belf. Jun. Faith, Truman, we may talk of mighty matters, of our honesty and morality ; but a young fellow carries that about him that will make him a knave now and then in spite of his teeth. Besides, I am afraid it is impossible for us profane fellows to succeed in that sanctified family.

Tru. You will not say so when you know what progress I have made in our affairs already.

Belf. Jun. Thou reviv'st my drooping hopes : tell me, are we like to succeed ? Oh, if I can but prevail upon my little pretty churchwoman, I am resolved to conform to her for ever.

Tru. Look under my coat ! Am I not well habited ? With a plain band, bob peruke, and no cuffs.

Belf. Jun. Verily, like one of the pure ones.

Tru. Yea : and our frequenting of sermons and lectures (which Heaven knows we did out of no good, but for the sake of these little ones) has used me to their style. Thus qualified, I got access into the house. Having found that their gouvernante is sister to a weaver in the west, whom I know, I pretended to be her cousin, and was admitted to her by her brother, and was

Belf. Jun. Most fortunate! Why does he keep 'em so strictly? Never to see the face of man?

Tru. Be not troubled at that, 'twill forward our design; they'll be the more earnest to be delivered. But no Italian women are so closely confined. The pure knave intends to sell them; even his daughter, who has a good fortune left her by a widow, that was her aunt. And for his niece, he has as good as agreed already with your father for five thousand pounds, to marry her to your brother in the country. Her uncle gave her twenty thousand pounds, and this is the reason of confining 'em, for fear of losing the money.

Belf. Jun. With my father, say you?

Tru. Most certain: this I learnt out of Madam Gouvernante at the first interview.

Belf. Jun. This is a very odd accident: 'twill make my difficulty greater.

Tru. Not at all; as liars are always readiest to believe lies, I never knew a hypocrite but might be easily cozened by another hypocrite. I have made my way, and I warrant thee a good event. I intend to grow great with the father.

Belf. Jun. Thy sanguine temper makes thee always hope in every enterprise.

Tru. You might observe whenever we stared upon them, they would steal a look at us; by stealth have often twisted eye-beams with us.

Belf. Jun. The sour and devout look indeed seems but put on: there is a pretty warmth and tenderness in their eyes that now and then glides o'er the godly look; like the sun's light, when, breaking through a cloud, it swiftly glides upon a field of corn.

Tru. The air of their faces plainly shows they have wit, that must despise those trifling forms; their precise looks most surely are constrained.

Enter Mrs. TERMAGANT.

Belf. Jun. How, Madam Termagant here! then we shall have fine work. What wind blows you hither?

Term. How dare you think that I, of all womankind, should be used thus?

Belf. Jun. You mean, not used; that's your grievance.

Term. Good Mr. Disdain; I shall spoil your scoffing. Has my love deserved to be thus slighted? I, that have refused princes for your sake? Did not all the town court me? And must I choose such an ungrateful wretch?

Belf. Jun. When you were first in season you were a little courted by some of quality: mistresses, like green peas, at first coming are only had by the rich, but afterwards they come to everybody.

Term. Curse on your saucy similes! Was not I yours, and only yours?

Belf. Jun. I had not faith enough for that; but if you were I never had any that was mine and only mine, but I made 'em all mankind's before I had done.

Term. Ah, traitor! And you must pick me out to make this base example of. Must I be left?

Belf. Jun. Left! Yes, sure. Left! Why, you were not married to me: I took no lease of your frail tenement: I was but a tenant at my own will.

Term. Insolent! How dare you thus provoke my fury? Was ever woman's love like mine to thee? Perfidious man! [Weeps.]

Belf. Jun. So: after the thunder, thus the heat-drops fall!

Term. No; I scorn that thou shouldst bring tears into my eyes.

Belf. Jun. Why do you come to trouble me?

Term. Since I can please no longer, I'll come to plague thee: and if I die before thee my ghost shall

Belf. Jun. Indeed your love was most particular, with spitting and scratching, like caterwauling. And in the best of humours you were ever murmuring and complaining: "Oh, my head aches! I am so sick!" And jealous to madness too!

Term. Oh, devil incarnate!

Tru. Belfond, thou art the most ungentle knight alive.

Term. Methinks the pretty child I have had by you should make you less inhuman.

Belf. Jun. Let me have it; I'll breed it up.

Term. No, thou shalt never have it while thou liv'st. I'll pull it limb from limb ere thou shalt have it.

Belf. Jun. This is so unnatural that you will make me so far from thinking it mine that I shall not believe it yours; but that you have put a false child upon me.

Term. Unworthy wretch!

Belf. Jun. When thou art old enough, thy malice and ill humour will qualify thee for a witch; but thou hadst never douceurs enough in thy youth to fit thee for a mistress.

Term. How dare you provoke me thus? For what little dirty wench am I thus used? If she is above ground I'll find her, and tear her eyes out. Ha—by the bed I see the devil has been here to-night—Oh, oh, I cannot bear it. [*Falls into a fit.*

Tru. Belfond, help the lady, for shame; lay hold on her.

Belf. Jun. No, no, let her alone; she will not hurt herself, I warrant thee: she is a rare actor. She acts a fit of the mother the best of any one in England. Ha, ha, ha.

Tru. How canst thou be so cruel?

Belf. Jun. What a devil should I do? If a man lies once with a woman is he bound to do it for ever?

Term. Oh! oh!

Term. Is it so? Devil, devil! I'll spoil your point de Venise for you. [*Flies at him.*]

Belf. Jun. Will you force me to make my footman turn you out?

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Sir, your father and your uncle are coming hither.

Belf. Jun. 'Sdeath! my father! 'tis impossible.

Foot. By heaven, 'tis true! they are coming up by this time.

Belf. Jun. Look you, madam, you may if you will ruin me; and put me out of all means of doing for you or your child. Try me once more, and get into the bed and cover yourself with the quilt, or I am undone.

Term. Villain, you deserve to be ruined; but I love my child too well.

Tru. For Heaven's sake hide yourself in the bed quickly.

Term. No, no, I'll run into the closet.

Belf. Jun. Death and hell! I am ruined: there's a young girl there: she'll make yet a worse uproar.

Tru. Peace, let me alone. Madam, whatever happens, ruin not yourself and child inevitably.

*Enter Sir WILLIAM BELFOND, Sir EDWARD
and Servants.*

Sir Edw. Ned, good-morrow to thee.

Belf. Jun. Your blessing, sir.

Sir Edw. Heaven bless thee. Here's one unexpected.

Belf. Jun. My father! I beg your blessing, sir.

Sir Will. Heaven mend you; it can never bless you, in the lewd course you are in.

Belf. Jun. You are misinformed, sir: my courses are not so lewd as you imagine.

Sir Will. Do you see! I am misinformed: he'll give me the lie.

Belf. Jun. I would first bite my tongue in pieces, and

been guilty of, I doubt not but in a short time to please you fully.

Sir Edw. Well said, Ned. I dare swear thou wilt.

Sir Will. Good Brother Credulous, I thank heaven I am not so. You were not drunk last night with bullies, and roared and ranted, scoured, broke windows, beat the watch, broke open a house, and forced away a wench in Salisbury Court! This is a fine life! This he calls heats of youth!

Belf. Jun. I was at home by eight a clock last night, and supped at home; and never keep such company.

Sir Will. No, no; you are not called Squire Belfond by the scoundrels your companions. 'Twas not you: no, no.

Belf. Jun. Not I, upon my faith; I never keep such company, or do such actions. If any one should call me Squire I'd break his head: some rascal has usurped my name.

Sir Edw. Look you, brother, what would you have? This must be some mistake.

Sir Will. What a devil! You believe this too? Ounds! you make me mad! Is there any of our name in England, but ourselves? Does he think to flam me with a lie?

Belf. Jun. I scorn a lie; 'tis the basest thing a gentleman can be guilty of; all my servants can testify I stirred not out last night.

Tru. I assure you, sir, he was not abroad last night.

Sir Will. You assure me! Who are you? one of his hopeful companions? No, your clothes are not good enough: you may be his pimp.

Tru. You are the father of my friend, an old gentleman, and a little mad.

Sir Will. Old! Walk down; I'll try your youth. I'll fight the bravest ruffian he keeps company with.

Sir Edw. Brother, are you mad? Has the country robbed you of all good manners and common sense?

Sir Will. I had a bout with two of your bullies in the Temple-walks.

Belf. Jun. Whom does he mean? This is a gentleman of estate and quality; he has above £2,000 a year.

Sir Edw. You are a madman; I am ashamed of you. Sir, I beseech you pardon my brother's passion, which transports him beyond civility.

Belf. Jun. I know you will, for my sake.

Tru. He is the father of my dearest friend; I shall be glad to serve him.

Sir Edw. Will you never be of age of discretion? for shame, use me, your son, and everybody better.

Sir Will. Well, I must be run down like a tame puppy,
Lucia [*within*]. Murder! murder! Help! help! ah! ah!

[*TERMAGANT pulls LUCIA out by the hair; they part them.*]

Belf. Jun. Oh, this damned she-devil!

Term. I'll make you an example! Will you see him, whether I will or no, you young whore?

Sir Will. Here's a son! Here's a fine son! Here's your breeding! Here's a pretty son! Here's a delicate son! Here's a dainty son!

Sir Edw. If he be mad, will you be madder?

Belf. Jun. Turn out this she-bear; turn her out to the rabble!

Term. Revenge, you villain, revenge!

[*Exeunt MRS. TERMAGANT and Footman.*]

Belf. Jun. Dear friend, prithee see this innocent girl safe in the chair, from that outrageous strumpet's fury.

[*Exeunt TRUMAN and LUCIA.*]

Sir Will. Here's a son! here's a son! Very well! make much of him! Here's the effect of whoring!

Belf. Jun. No sir, 'tis the effect of not whoring: this rage is because I have cast her off.

Sir Will. Yes, yes, for a younger; a sweet reforma-

Belf. Jun. Sir, the young girl was never here before ; she brought me linen from the Exchange.

Sir Will. A fine bawd her mistress in the meantime !

Belf. Jun. This furious wench coming in to rail at me for my leaving her, I was forced to put the other in that closet ; and at your coming up, against my will, this run into the same closet.

Sir Will. Sirrah ! most audacious rogue ! do you sham me ? Do you think you have your uncle to deal with ? Avoid my presence, sirrah : get you out, sirrah.

Belf. Jun. I am sorry I offended : I obey.

[Exit BELFONT JUNIOR.

Sir Will. I could have found in my heart to have cudgelled him.

Sir Edw. Shame of our family ! you behave yourself so like a madman and a fool, you will be begged : these fits are more extravagant than anything he can be guilty of. Do you give your son the words of command you use to dogs ?

Sir Will. Justify him, do : he's an excellent son ! a very pretty son ! a delicate son ! a discreet son ! he is.

Sir Edw. Pray use me better, or I'll assure you, we must never see one another. Besides, I shall entail my estate, for want of issue by this son here, upon another family, if you will treat me thus.

Sir Will. What says he ? [aside]. Well, brother, I ha' done : his lewdness distracted me. Oh my poor boy in the country ! I long to see him, the great support of my declining age.

Sir Edw. Let us calmly reason. What has your breeding made of him (with your patience) but a blockhead ?

Sir Will. A blockhead ! when he comes, the world shall judge which of us has been the wiser in the education of a son. A blockhead ? Why, he knows a sample of any grain as well as e'er a fellow in the north :

his seasons of ploughing, sowing, harrowing, laying fallow : understands all sorts of manure : and ne'er a one that wears a head can wrong him in a bargain.

Sir Edw. A very pretty fellow for a gentleman's bailiff.

Sir Will. For his own bailiff, and to be rich——

Sir Edw. Swine, and live as nastily ; and keep worse company than beasts in a forest.

Sir Will. He knows no vice, poor boy !

Sir Edw. He will have his turn to know it then ; as sure as he will have the small-pox ; and then he'll be fond on't, when his brother has left it.

Sir Will. I defy the omen : he never whores, nor drinks hard, but upon design, as driving a bargain, or so ; and that I allow him.

Sir Edw. So : knavish and designing drunkenness you allow ; but not good fellowship for mirth and conversation.

Sir Will. Now, brother, pray what have you made your son good for, with your breeding you so much boast of ? Let's hear that now : come on, let's hear.

Sir Edw. First, I bred him at Westminster School, till he was master of the Greek and Latin tongues ; then I kept him at the University, where I instructed him to read the noble Greek and Roman authors.

Sir Will. Well, and what use can he make of the noble Greek and Latin, but to prate like a pedant, and show his parts over a bottle ?

Sir Edw. To make a man fit for the conversation of learned gentlemen is one noble end of study : but those authors make him wiser and honester, sir, to boot.

Sir Will. Wiser ! Will he ever get sixpence, or improve or keep his estate by 'em ?

Sir Edw. Mean notions ! I made him well versed in history.

Sir Will. That's a pretty study indeed ! How can there be a true history when we see no man living is

Sir Edw. He by the way read natural philosophy, and had insight enough in the mathematics.

Sir Will. Natural philosophy! knows nothing. Nor would I give a fart for any mathematician, but a carpenter, bricklayer, measurer of land, or sailor.

Sir Edw. Some moderate skill in it will use a man to reason closely.

Sir Will. Very pretty! Reason! Can he reason himself into six shillings by all this?

Sir Edw. He needs it not. But to go on; after three years I removed him from the University, lest he should have too strong a tincture of it, to the Temple; there I got a modest, learned lawyer, of little practice, for want of impudence (and there are several such that want, while empty impudent fellows thrive and swagger at the Bar): this man I got to instruct my son in some old common-law books, the statutes, and the best pleas of the Crown, and the constitution of the old true English Government.

Sir Will. Does he get a shilling by all this? But what a devil made you send him into France, to make an arrant vain coxcomb of him?

Sir Edw. There he did all his manly exercises; saw two campaigns; studied history, civil laws, and laws of commerce; the language he spoke well ere he went. He made the tour of Italy, and saw Germany, and the Low Countries, and returned well skilled in foreign affairs, and a complete accomplished English gentleman.

Sir Will. And to know nothing of his own estate, but how to spend it. My poor boy has travelled to better purpose; for he has travelled all about my lands, and knows every acre and nook, and the value of it. There's travel for you! Poor boy.

Sir Edw. And he enjoys so little of that estate he sees as to be impatient for your death: I dare swear mine wishes my life next to his own. I have made him a com-

Sir Will. Serve his country! Pox on his country! 'Tis a country of such knaves, 'tis not worth the serving: all those who pretend to serve it mean nothing but themselves. But amongst all things, how came you to make him a fiddler; always fluting or scraping? I had as lief hear a jew's-harp!

Sir Edw. I love music. Besides, I would have young gentlemen have as many helps to spend their time alone as can be; most of our youth are ruined by having time lie heavy on their hands, which makes them run into any base company to shun themselves.

Sir Will. And all this gentleman's education is come to drinking, whoring, and debauchery.

Enter Servant to Sir WILLIAM.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Scrapeall is at your attorney's chamber in the Temple, and desires to discourse you.

Sir Will. Brother, I must go: I shall tell you, when I see you next, what is my business with him.

Sir Edw. Be sure to dine with me.

Sir Will. I will.

[*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE II.]

Enter BELFOND SENIOR, SHAMWELL, CHEATLY, HACKUM, LOLPOOP, French Valet, and two Footmen, at the "George" in Whitefriars.

Cheat. Now thou look'st like an heir indeed, my lad: when thou cam'st up thou hadst the scurvy phiz of a mere country put. He did thee a kindness that took thee for a chief constable.

Sham. Now thou shinest, cousin, like a true Belfond! What, £3,000 a year entailed, and live like a butcher, or grazier, in the country?

Hack. Give you joy, noble sir! now you look like a true gallant Squire.

Lolp. Like a Squire! like a puppy, by the mass.

Belf. Sen. Well, I was the fortunat'st man to light upon such true, such real friends : I had never known any breeding or gentility without you.

Sham. You buried all your good parts in a sordid swinish life in the north.

Belf. Sen. My father kept me in ignorance, and would have made a very silly blockheadly put of me. Why, I never heard a gentleman banter, or cut a sham in my life before I saw you, nor ever heard such ingenious discourse.

Hack. Nay, the world knows Mr. Cheatly and Mr. Shamwell are as complete gentlemen as ever came within the Friar. And yet we have as fine gentlemen as any in England ; we have those here that have broke for £100,000.

Belf. Sen. Well, I protest and vow, I am so very fine, I do not know where to look upon myself first : I don't think my Lord Mayor's son is finer.

Cheat. He is a scoundrel compared to thee : there's ne'er a prig at Court outshines thee. Thou shalt strut in the Park, where countesses shall be enamoured on thee.

Belf. Sen. I am overjoyed : I can stand no ground. My dear friend Cheatly ! My sweet cousin Shamwell ! Let me embrace such dear, such loving friends ! I could grow to you, methinks, and stick here for ever.

[*They embrace.*]

Lolp. Ah ! dear loving dogs ! They love him, by'r lady, as a cat loves a mouse.

Belf. Sen. What is that you mutter, sirrah ? Come hither, sirrah ! you are finer than any squire in the country.

Lolp. Pox of finery ! I say ; yeow maken a mere ass, an owl of me. Here are sleeves fit for nought but a miller to steal with when he takes toll ; and damned cuffs here, one cannot dip one's meat i' th' sauce for them : Odsflesh, give me my awd clothes again : would I were a whome in my frock dressing of my soldiers.

Belf. Sen. Well, there's no making a whistle of a pig's tail ; this puppy will never learn any breeding. Sirrah, behold me : here's rigging for you ! Here's a nab ! you never saw such a one in your life.

Cheat. A rum nab. It is a beaver of £5.

Belf. Sen. Look you there, blockhead.

Lolp. Look yeow there, blockhead, I say. [*Aside.*

Hack. Let me see your porker. Here's a porker ! here's a tilter ! Ha, ha ! Oh how I could whip a prigster thro' the lungs ! Ha, ha ! [*Thrusts at LOLPOOP.*

Cheat. It cost sixteen louis d'ors in Paris.

Hack. Ha, ha ! [*He pushes towards LOLPOOP.*

Lolp. Hawd you, hawd you. And I tak kibbo, I'll raddle the bones o' thee ; Ise tell a that : for aw th'art a captain, mun.

Belf. Sen. Look, sirrah ; here's a show, you rogue ! here's a sight of cole, darby, the ready, and the rhino. You rascal, you understand me not ! you loggerhead, you silly put, you understand me not ! here are megs and smelts ; I ne'er had such a sight of my own in my life. Here are more megs and smelts, you rogue ; you understand me not.

Lolp. By'r lady, not I ; I understand not this south-country speech, not I.

Belf. Sen. Ah, methinks I could tumble in 'em. But d'ye hear, put, put, put, sirrah, here's a scout. What's a clock ? what's a clock, sirrah ? Here's a tatler—gold, all gold, you rogue. Look on my finger, sirrah, look here ; here's a famble, put, put—you don't know what a famble, a scout, or a tatler is, you put !

Lolp. Fine sights for my awd master ! Marry, would I were sent from constable to constable, and whipped home again, by'r lady !

Belf. Sen. Let's whet ; bring some wine. Come on ; I love a whet. Pray lets huzza ; I love huzzaing mightily ;

Enter Servants with Bottles.

Hack. They are just coming in. Come, Betty.

Enter Mrs. HACKUM and Mrs. MARGARET.

Mrs. Hack. Come in, Mrs. Margaret, come.

Marg. I am so ashamed.

Belf. Sen. Madam, your servant; I am very much obliged to your favours.

Mrs. Hack. I shall be proud to do a gentleman, as you are, any service that lies in my power, as a gentlewoman.

Belf. Sen. O lord, madam, your most humble servant to command. My pretty blowen, let me kiss thee: thou shall be my natural; I must manage thee. She is a pure blowen. My pretty rogue—— how happy shall I be! Pox o' the country, I say! Madam Hackum, to testify my gratitude, I make bold to equip you with some megs, smelts, decus's, and Georges.

Mrs. Hack. I am your faithful servant, and I shall be glad of any occasion whereby to express how ready I am to serve any gentleman, or person of quality, as becomes a gentlewoman; and, upon honour, sir, you shall never find me tardy.

Cheat. Come on, sirrah, fill up all the glasses; a health to this pretty lady.

Belf. Sen. Ay, and i'faith I'll drink it, pretty rogue.

Sham. Let them be facers.

Belf. Sen. Facers! What are those? Nay, give the lady, and the captain's lady too.

Marg. No, I cannot drink, I am not dry.

Mrs. Hack. Give it me.

Sham. There's a facer for you.

[*Drinks the glass clear off, and puts it to his face.*]

Belf. Sen. Excellent, adad! Come, to our facers. [*All do the like.*] It is the prettiest way of drinking: fill again, we'll have more facers. [*Fiddles flourish without.*] He

dance, roar, fling the house out of the windows; and I will manage my pretty natural, my pure blowen here. Huzza! My dear friends, Shamwell and Cheatly, I am transported! My pretty natural; kiss me, kiss me. Huzza!

Marg. Nay, puh, you do so ruffle one's things!

Belf. Sen. I'll ruffle thee more, my little rogue, before I have done with thee. Well. I shall never make you amends, my dear friends. Sirrah, Lolpoop, is not this better than the country, sirrah? Give the rogue a facer to my mistress. Come, fill about the facers. Come on, my lads, stand to't. Huzza! I vow 'tis the prettiest way of drinking, never stir.

Enter four Servants with four dishes of meat, who cross the stage.

Cheat. So, here's the prog, here's the dinner coming up; the cloth's laid in the next room. Here's a noble dinner.

Belf. Sen. Ha, boys, we'll sing, and roar, and huzza, like devils.

Enter Sir WILLIAM BELFOND at the door.

Ounds! Who's here? my father? Lolpoop, Lolpoop, hide me: give me my Joseph. Let's sneak into the next room.

Sham. Death! What shall we do? 'This is the bully's father.

Cheat. Let me alone: I warrant you.

Hack. This is the old fellow I had like to have had a rubbers with in the morning.

Sir Will. Is he fallen into these hands? Nay, then he is utterly lost: his estate is spent before he has it.

Cheat. How now, Prig! what makes you come into our room?

Sir Will. I would speak with 'Squire Belfond.

kinsman too? Would you bring my son to the gallows? You most notorious seducer of young heirs, I know you too. I warrant you, I'll keep my dear boy in the country far enough from your clutches. In short, I would speak with my rebellious town son, who is here, and bespoke this great dinner.

Cheat. (bantering). Why look you, sir, according to your assertion of things doubtful in themselves; you must be forced to grant, that whatsoever may be, may also as well not be, in their own essential differences and degrees.

Sir Will. What stuff is this? Where is my son?

Cheat. Your question consists of two terms; the one, ubi, where: but of that I shall say nothing, because here is no son, nor anything belonging to you, to be the subject matter of debate, at this time: forasmuch as——

Sir Will. Do you hear me, sir? let me see my son; and offer to banter me, or sham me once more, and I'll cut your throat, and cudgel your brace of cowards!

Cheat. Nay, then 'tis time to take a course with you. Help! help! an arrest! an arrest! a bailiff! a bailiff!

Hack. and Sham. An arrest! an arrest!

Sir Will. You dogs! am I a bailiff?

Cheat. You shall be used like one, you old prig. An arrest!

Sir Will. Impudent dogs! I must run, or I shall be pulled in pieces. Help! help! an arrest! an arrest!

[*All cry out, "An arrest!" Drawers and some of the rabble come in, and join with the cry, which gets into the street; there they cry out too. He joins the cry, and runs away. CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, HACKUM, and Drawers follow him, and cry out, "Stop! stop! a bailiff!"*

Cheat., Sham., Hack. (in the street). Stop! stop! a bailiff!

[*Sir WILLIAM runs. the rabble pursue him across the*



ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*Enter Mrs. TERMAGANT and her Brother.*



TERM. As I told you, I have had a child by him ; he is my husband by contract, and casts me off : has dishonoured me, and made me infamous. Shall you think to game and bully about the town, and not vindicate the honour of your family.

Brother. No man shall dare to dishonour our family.

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR.

Term. If you don't cut his throat, you'll be kicked up and down for a damned coward : and besides, you shall never see a penny of mine more.

Brother. I'll fight him, an he be above ground.

Term. There, there's the traitor, walking before his uncle's door : be sure dispatch him. On ; I'll withdraw. [*Exit.*

Brother. Do you hear, sir ? Do you know Mrs. Termagant ?

Belf. Jun. What makes you ask such a familiar question, sir ?

Brother. I am her brother.

Belf. Jun. Perhaps so. Well, I do ; what then, sir ?

Brother. Ours is as ancient a family as any in England, though perhaps unfortunate at present : the

Belf. Jun. It may be so: I am no herald.

Brother. And do you think you shall dishonour this family, and debauch my sister, unchastised? You are contracted to her, and have lain with her.

Belf. Jun. Look you, sir, I see what you would be at; she's mad, and puts you upon this. Let me advise you, 'tis a foolish quarrel.

Brother. You debauched her, and have ruined her.

Belf. Jun. 'Tis false; the silliest coxcomby beau in town had the first of her.

Brother. You have had a child by her?

Belf. Jun. Then I have added one to your ancient family that came in with the Normans. Prithee do not provoke me to take away one from it.

Brother. You are contracted to her; and if you will marry her I'll save your life.

Belf. Jun. 'Tis a lie; I am not contracted to her. Begone, urge me no more.

Brother. Draw.

Belf. Jun. Have at you.

Enter Sir EDWARD BELFOND.

Sir Edw. Hold, hold: oh my son! my son! [*BELFOND strikes up his heels, and disarms him.*] What's the matter, my dear son? art thou not hurt? Let me see.

Belf. Jun. No, sir; not at all, dear sir. Here, take your sword, and be gone. Next time you come to trouble me I'll cut your throat. [*Exit Brother.*]

Sir Edw. What's the matter, dear Ned? This is about some wench, I warrant.

Belf. Jun. 'Tis a brother of that furious wench you saw, sir; her violent love is converted into hatred.

Sir Edw. You young fellows will never get knowledge, but at your own cost; the precepts of the old weigh nothing with you.

the best of men ; the best of fathers. I have as much honour for you, as I can have for human nature : and I love you ten thousand times above my life.

Sir Edw. Dear Ned, thou art the greatest joy I have : and believe thy father, and thy friend, there's nothing but anxiety in vice. I am not strait-laced ; but when I was young, I ne'er knew anything gotten by wenching, but duels, claps, and bastards : and every drunken fit is a short madness, that cuts off a good part of life.

Belf. Jun. You have reason, sir, and shall ever be my oracle hereafter.

Sir Edw. 'Tis time now to take up, and think of being something in the world. See then, my son, though thou shouldst not be over-busy to side with parties, and with factions, yet that thou takest a care to make some figure in the world, and to sustain that part thy fortune, nature, and thy education fit thee for.

Belf. Jun. Your wise advice I'll strive to follow. But I must confess, I am most passionately in love, and am, with your consent, resolved to marry : though I will perish ere I do it without it.

Sir Edw. Be sure to know the humour of the woman ; you run a mighty hazard. But if you be valiant enough to venture (which, I must confess, I never was), I'll leave it to your own choice : I know you have so much honour, you will do nothing below yourself.

Belf. Jun. I doubt not of your approbation ; but till I can be sure of obtaining her, pardon me if I conceal her name.

Enter Sir WILLIAM BELFONT.

Sir Edw. Your father comes ; retire a little within hearing, till I soften him somewhat : he is much moved, as he always is, I think. [*He retires.*]

Sir Will. Now, brother, as I was saying, I can convince you ; your son, your darling, whom you long have

Sir Edw. Still upon this subject !

Sir Will. 'Tis very well ! My mouth must be stopped, and your ears : 'tis wondrous well ! But I have had much ado to escape with life from him and his notorious fellow-rogues. As I told you, when I had found that the rogue was with his wicked associates, at the "George" in Whitefriars ; when they saw I was resolved to see my son, and was rough with 'em, Cheatly and his rogues set up a cry against me, "An arrest ! a bailiff ! an arrest !" The mob, and all the rakehells in the house, and there about the streets assembled : I ran, and they had a fair course after me into Fleet Street. Thanks to the vigour I have left, my heels saved my life : your infamous rogue would have suffered me to have been sacrificed to the rabble.

Sir Edw. Ha, ha, ha ! very pretty, i'faith ; it run very well : can you tell it over again, think you ?

Sir Will. Ounds ! am I become your scorn ? your laughter ?

Sir Edw. Ned, you hear all this ?

[BELFONT JUNIOR *appears.*

Belf. Jun. Yes ; and am distracted to know the meaning of it.

Sir Will. Vile parricide ! are you gotten here before me ? You are monstrous nimble, sir.

Belf. Jun. By all the powers of Heaven, I never was at the "George" in my life.

Sir Will. Oh, then they stay for you, you have not yet been there : you'll lose your dinner, 'tis served up. Vile wretch !

Belf. Jun. All this is cross-purposes to me : I came to my uncle's house from my own lodgings immediately, when you were pleased to banish me your presence ; and here have been ever since.

Sir Will. Nay, he that will be a thorough villain must be a complete liar. Were not you even now with your associate-rascals at the "George" ?

company of any of that gang. I know their infamy too well to be acquainted with their persons.

Sir Will. I am not drunk, nor mad; but you will make me one of them.

Belf. Jun. These rascals have gotten somebody to personate me, and are undoubtedly carrying on some cheat in my name.

Sir Edw. Brother, it must be.

Sir Will. Yes, yes, no doubt it must be so: and I must be in a dream all this while, I must.

Sir Edw. You say yourself you did not see my son there.

Sir Will. No, he was too nimble for me, and got out some back way, to be here before me; so to face down the truth.

Belf. Jun. I'll instantly go thither, and discover this imposture, that I may suffer no longer for the faults of others.

Sir Edw. Dine first: my dinner's ready.

Belf. Jun. Your pardon, sir, I will go instantly: I cannot rest till I have done myself right.

Sir Edw. Let's in, and discourse of this matter. Brother, I must say this, I never took him in a lie since he could speak.

Sir Will. Took him? No, nor ever will take him in anything.

Sir Edw. Let's in; and send your own man with him.

Sir Will. It shall be so; though I am convinced already. Is there any of the name but you, and I, and my two sons, in England?

Belf. Jun. Be pleased to send my two footmen out to me, sir.

Sir Edw. Have a care of a quarrel, and bringing the Alsatians about your ears. Come, brother.

[*Exeunt* SIR EDWARD and SIR WILLIAM.]

Enter LUCIA *running*, TERMAGANT *pursuing* her.

Lucia. Help, help, help!

Lucia. Oh lord! Are you here! Save me, save me! This barbarous woman threatens to murder me for your sake.

Belf. Jun. Save thee, dear miss? That I would, at the peril of my life: no danger should make me quit thee—cannons, nor bombs.

Term. Damned false fellow! I'll take a time to slit her nose.

Lucia. Oh Heaven! she'll kill me.

Belf. Jun. Thou devil, in thy properest shape of furious and malicious woman: resolve to leave off this course this moment, or by Heaven I'll lay thee fast in Bedlam. Hadst thou fifty brothers I'd fight with them all, in defence of this dear pretty miss.

Lucia. Dear kind creature! This sweet love of thine, methinks, does make me valiant, and I fear her not so much.

Enter ROGER, and his two Footmen.

Belf. Jun. Dear pretty miss, I'll be thy safeguard.

Term. Thou falsest, basest of thy sex, look to see thy child sent thee in pieces, baked in a pie; for so I will.

Belf. Jun. Though thou hatest everything living besides thyself, yet thou hast too much tenderness for thy own person to bring it to the gallows: offer to follow us one step, and I'll set the rabble upon thee. Come, my dear child. [Exit.

Term. Thou shalt be dogged; and I'll know who she is. Oh revenge, revenge! if thou dost not exceed, thou equallest all the ecstasies of love. [Exit.

[SCENE II. ?]

Enter CHEATLY and SHAMWELL.

Cheat. Thus far our matters go swimmingly; our Squire is as debauched and prodigal as we can wish.

Sham. I told you, all England could not afford an heir like this for our purpose; but we must be patient.

drunk the first two or three days, the least bumper will warm his addle head afresh at any time : he paid a great fine, and may sit at a little rent. I must be gone for a moment ; our Suffolk heir is nabbed for a small business, and I must find him some sham-bail : see the captain performs his charge. [*Exit.*

Enter HACKUM.

Sham. Here he comes. See, captain, you make that blockhead drunk, and do as we directed.

Hack. He's almost drunk, and we are in readiness for him ; the Squire is retired with his natural, so fond.

Sham. 'Tis well ; about your business, I'll be with you soon. [*Exit SHAMWELL.*

Enter LOLPOOP.

Hack. Come on, Mr. Lolpoop : you and I'll be merry by ourselves.

Lolp. I must needs say, captain, yeow are a civil gentleman ; but yeow han given me so many bumpers, I am meet drunken already.

Hack. Come on, I warrant you : here's a bumper to the Squire's lady.

Lolp. With all my heart.

Enter BETTY.

Hack. Oh, Mrs. Betty, art thou come ? I sent for this pretty rogue to keep you company : she's as pretty a company-keeper as any in the Friars.

Lolp. Odsflesh, what should I do in company with gentlewomen ? 'Tis not for such fellee's as I.

Hack. Have courage, man. You shall have her, and never want such a one while I am your friend.

Lolp. O lord, I ! Do yeow know what yeow saen.

Betty. A proper, handsome gentleman, I swear.

Lolp. Who, I ? No, no ! what done yeow mean, forsooth ?

Betty. I vow, I have not seen a handsomer ! So

Lolp. Oh lord, I! I! Yeow jeern me now.

Hack. Why don't you salute her, man?

Lolp. Who, I? By the mass, I dare not be so bold! What! I kiss such a fine gentlewoman?

Hack. Kiss, kiss her, man; this town affords such everywhere. You'll hate the country when you see a little more. Kiss her, I say!

Lolp. I am so hala; I am ashamed.

Betty. What, must I do it to you, then?

Lolp. Oh rare! By the mass, whoo kisses daintily, and whoo has a breath like a caw.

Hack. Come, t'other bumper. To her health let this be. Here's to you!

Lolp. Thanka; forsooth, and yeow pleasen.

[*Drinks to her.*]

Betty. Yes, anything you do will please me.

Lolp. Captain, captain! What done yeow leave me?

[*HACKUM steals out and leaves them together.*]

Betty. What, are you afraid of me?

Lolp. Nay, by'r lady, I am ashamed; who's farinely a pratty lass! Marry!

Betty. A handsome man, and ashamed!

[*She edges nearer to him.*]

Lolp. Who, I a handsome mon? Nay, nay.

Betty. A lovely man, I vow! I cannot forbear kissing you.

Lolp. O dear; 'tis your goodness. Odsflesh, whoo loves me! who'll make me stark wood e'en naw; an yeow kissen me, by'r lady, I's kiss yeow.

Betty. What care I?

Lolp. Looka there naw; waunds, whoo's a dainty lass, pure white and red; and most of the London lasses are pure white and red; welly aw like; and I had her in some nook! Odsflesh, I say no more.

Betty. I'll stay no longer. Farewell! [*She retires.*]

Lolp. Nay, I's not leave a soo; marry, whoo's a gallant

Enter HACKUM.

Hack. So he's caught; this will take him off from teasing his master with his damned good counsel.

Enter CHEATLY and SHAMWELL.

Cheat. I have sent our Alsatian attorney, and as substantial bail as can be wished, for the redemption of our Suffolk caravan. He's ripe for another judgment; he begins to want the ready much.

Sham. Scrapeall is provided for him. How now, captain, what's become of your blockhead?

Hack. He's nibbling at the bait; he'll swallow presently.

Cheat. But hark you, Shamwell! I have chosen the subtlest and handsomest wench about this town for the great fortune I intend to bestow this hopeful kinsman of yours upon. 'Tis Mrs. Termagant, his brother's cast mistress, who resents her being left to that degree that though she meditates all the revenge besides that a woman's nature is capable of against him, yet her heart leapt for joy at this design of marrying his elder brother, if it were for nothing but to plague the younger, and take place of his wife.

Sham. I have seen her. She will personate a town lady of quality admirably, and be as haughty and impertinent as the best of 'em. Is the lodging, and plate, and things ready for her?

Cheat. It is; she comes there this afternoon. She has set her mind to a good swinging judgment; and thou and I will divide, my lad. And now all we have to do is to preserve him to ourselves from any other correspondence, and at downright enmity with his father and brother; and we must keep him continually hot, as they do a glass-house, or our work will go backward.

*Enter BELFOND SENIOR, Mrs. MARGARET, Mrs. HACKUM,
and his Servants*

my neck ; make me your footstool. You have made me a happy man to know plenty and pleasure, good company, good wine, music, fine women ! Mrs. Hackum and I have been at bumpers hand to fist. Here's my pretty natural, my dear pretty rogue. Adad, she's a rare creature, a delicious creature ! And between you and I, dear friend, she has all her goings as well as e'er a blowen in Christendom. Dear Madam Hackum, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Mrs. Hack. I am glad, sir, she gives your worship content, sir.

Belf. Sen. Content ! Ah, my pretty rogue ! Pox o' the country, I say ! Captain, captain, here ! let me equip thee with a quid !

Hack. Noble squire, I am your spaniel dog !

Belf. Sen. Pox o' the country, I say ! the best team of horses my father has shall not draw me thither again.

Sham. Be firm to your resolution and thou'lt be happy.

Cheat. If you meet either your father or brother, or any from those prigsters, stick up thy countenance, or thou art ruined, my son of promise, my brisk lad in remainder. When one of 'em approaches thee we'll all pull down our hats and cry bow-wow.

Belf. Sen. I warrant you, I am hardened. I knew my brother in the country, but they shan't sham me, they shall find me a smoky thief. I vow, 'twill be a very pretty way ; bow-wow ; I warrant thee I'll do it.

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR, two Footmen, and ROGER.

Sham. Who the devil's here ? Your brother ! Courage.

Cheat. Courage ! be rough and haughty, my bumpkin.

Belf. Sen. Hey, where are all my servants ? Call 'em in. [CAPTAIN *calls them.*

Belf. Jun. Who is that in this house here, who usurps my name, and is called Squire Belfond ?

Belf. Sen. One who is called so without usurping

Belf. Jun. Brother! Death! do I dream? Can I trust my senses? Is this my brother?

Belf. Sen. Ay, ay. I know I am transmogrified, but I am your very brother Ned.

Belf. Jun. Could you be so unkind to come to town and not see your nearest kindred, your uncle and myself?

Belf. Sen. I would not come to disgrace you till my equipage was all ready. Hey, La Mar, is my coach at the gate next to the "Green Dragon?"

Valet. *Oui, monsieur.*

Belf. Sen. But I was resolved to give you a visit to-morrow morning.

Belf. Jun. I should have been glad to have seen you anywhere but here.

Belf. Sen. But here! why, 'tis as good a tavern as any's in town. Sirrah, fill some bumpers! Here, brother, here's a facer to you: we'll huzza; call in the fiddlers.

Belf. Jun. I am struck with astonishment! Not all Ovid's Metamorphosis can show such a one as this.

Belf. Sen. I see you wonder at my change. What! would you never have a man learn breeding, a-dad? Should I always be kept a country bubble, a caravan, a mere put? I am brave and boosy.

Belf. Jun. 'Slife! He has got the cant too.

Belf. Sen. I shall be clear by and by. T'other bumper, brother.

Belf. Jun. No, I'll drink no more; I hate drinking between meals.

Belf. Sen. O lord! O lord! hate drinking between meals! What company do you keep? But 'tis all one. Here, brother, pray salute this pretty rogue. I manage her. She is my natural, my pure blowen. I am resolved to be like a gentleman, and keep, brother.

Belf. Sen. This is Mrs. Hackum. I am much obliged to her. Pray salute her.

Belf. Jun. What a pox! Will he make me kiss the bawd, too?

Belf. Sen. Brother, now pray know these gentlemen here. They are the prettiest wits that are in town. And between you and I, brother, brave, gallant fellows, and the best friends I ever had in my life. This is Mr. Cheatly, and this is my cousin Shamwell.

Belf. Jun. I know 'em, and am acquainted with their worth.

Cheat. Your humble servant, sweet sir.

Sham. Your servant, cousin.

Belf. Sen. And this is my dear friend, Captain Hackum. There's not a braver fellow under the sun.

Belf. Jun. By Heaven, a downright Alsatian! [*Aside.*

Belf. Sen. Come, musicians, strike up and sing the catch the captain gave you, and we'll all join, i'faith. We can be merry, brother, and we can roar.

Hack. 'Tis a very pretty magnanimous military business upon the victory in Hungary.¹

Hark! how the Duke of Lorraine comes,
The brave, victorious soul of war;
With trumpets and with kettle-drums,
Like thunder rolling from afar!

On the left wing the conquering horse
The brave Bavarian duke does lead,
These heroes with united force
Fill all the Turkish hosts with dread.

Their bright comparisons behold;
Rich habits, streamers, shining arms,
The glittering steel, and burnished gold,
The pomp of war with all its charms!

¹ This refers to the campaign of 1687, and the victory at

With solemn march and fatal pace
They bravely on the foe press on ;
The cannons roar, the shot takes place,
Whilst smoke and dust obscure the sun.

The horses neigh, the soldiers shout,
And now the furious bodies join ;
The slaughter rages all about,
And men in groans their blood resign.

The weapons clash ! the roaring drum
With clangour of the trumpet's sound,
The howls and yells of men o'ercome,
And from the neighb'ring hills rebound.

Now, now the infidels give place,
Then all in routes they headlong fly ;
Heroes in dust pursue the chase,
While deafning clamours rend the sky.

Belf. Sen. You see, brother, what company I keep.
What's the matter? You are melancholy?

Belf. Jun. I am not a little troubled, brother, to find
you in such cursed company.

Belf. Sen. Hold, brother, if you love your life. They
are all stout; but that same captain has killed his five men.

Belf. Jun. Stout, say you? This fellow Cheatly is
the most notorious rascal and cheat that ever was out
of a dungeon; this kinsman a most silly bubble first,
and afterwards a betrayer of young heirs, of which
they have not ruined less than two hundred, and made
them run out their estates before they came to them.

Belf. Sen. Brother, do you love your life? The
captain's a lion!

Belf. Jun. An ass, is he not? He is a ruffian, and
cock-bawd to that hen.

Cheat. If you were not the brother to my dearest
friend I know what my honour would prompt me to.

Sham. My dear cousin, thou shalt now find how entirely I am thine. My honour will not let me strike thy brother.

Hack. But that the punctilios of honour are sacred to me, which tell me nothing can provoke me against the brother of my noble friend, I had whipped him through the lungs ere this.

Belf. Sen. Well, never man met with such true, such loving friends.

Belf. Jun. Look you, brother, will this convince you, that you are fallen into the hands of fools, knaves, scoundrels, and cowards?

Belf. Sen. Fools! Nay, there I am sure you are out. They are all deep, they are very deep and sharp, sharp as needles, adad; the wittiest men in England. Here's Mr. Cheatly, in the first place, shall sham and banter with you, or any one you will bring, for five hundred pound of my money.

Belf. Jun. Rascally stuff; fit for no places but Ram Alley or Pie Corner.

Belf. Sen. Persuade me to that! They are the merriest companions and the truest friends to me. 'Tis well for you, adad, that they are so, for they are all of them as stout as Hector.

Belf. Jun. This is most amazing!

Sham. Did I not tell you he would envy your condition, and be very angry with us, that put you into't?

Cheat. He must needs be a kind brother. We prove ourselves your true friends, and have that respect for your blood, that we will let none of it out, where'er we meet it, upon any cause.

Belf. Sen. You see, brother, how their love prevails over their valour.

Belf. Jun. Their valour! Look you, brother, here's valour.
[Kicks CHEATLY and SHAMWELL.

Sham. Nothing shall make me transgress the rules of honour, I say.

Belf. Jun. Here! What are you? Sirrah kill-cow.

[Takes HACKUM by the nose and leads him.]

Hack. 'Tis no matter. I know honour; I know punctilios to a hair. You owe your life to your brother. Besides, I am to be second to a dear friend, and preserve my vigour for his service; but for all that, were he not your brother——

Belf. Jun. Will not this convince you, brother, of their cowardice?

Belf. Sen. No, I think not; for I am sure they are valiant. This convinces me of their respect and friendship to me. My best friends, let me embrace you; a thousand thanks to you.

Belf. Jun. I will redeem him yet from these rascals, if I can. You are upon the brink of ruin, if you go not off with me and reconcile yourself to my father; I'll undertake it upon good terms.

Belf. Sen. No, I thank you; I'll see no father. He shall use me no more like a dog. He shall put upon me no longer. Look you, sir, I have ready, rhino, cole, darby. Look here, sir!

Belf. Jun. Dear brother, let me persuade you to go along with me.

Belf. Sen. You love me, and use my best friends thus? ne'er stir, I desire none of your company. I'll stick to my friends. I look upon what you have done as an affront to me.

Hack. No doubt it is so.

Sham. That's most certain; you are in the right, cousin.

Cheat. We love you but too well, that angers him.

Belf. Jun. Well, I shall take my leave. You are in your cups. You will wish you had heard me. Rogues, I shall take a course with you.

Belf. Sen. Rogues! They scorn your words.

Belf. Sen. Fare you well, sir, an you be at that sport.

Belf. Jun. Roger, do not discover him to my father yet ; I'll talk with him cool in a morning first ; perhaps I may redeem him.

Roger. I'll dō as you would have me.

[*Exeunt* BELFONT JUNIOR, ROGER, and two Footmen.]

Belf. Sen. So, now we are free. Dear friends, I never can be grateful enough. But 'tis late, I must show my new coach ; come, ladies. [*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE III. ?]

Enter Attorney and LUCIA.

Att. How now, daughter Lucia, where hast thou been ?

Lucia. I have been at evening prayers at St. Bride's, and am going home through the Temple.

Att. Thou art my good girl.

Enter Mrs. TERMAGANT.

Lucia. Oh Heaven ! Who's here ?

Att. What's the matter ?

Lucia. I am taken ill on the sudden : I'll run home.

Term. Stay, stay ; thou wicked author of my misfortune.

Att. How's this ? Stay Lucia ! What mean you, madam ? The girl's strangely disordered.

Lucia. O Heaven ! I am utterly ruined, beyond redemption.

Term. Is she your daughter, sir ?

Att. She is.

Term. Then hear my story : I am contracted with all the solemnity that can be to Mr. Belfond, the merchant's son ; and for this wicked girl he has lately cast me off. And this morning I went to his lodgings to inquire a reason of his late carriage to me, I found there in his closet this young shameless creature, who had been in bed with him.

Att. O Heaven and earth ! Is this true, huswife.

Lucia. O Lord ! I ! I never saw the gentleman nor

Term. May all the judgments due to perjury fall on me, if this be not true: I tore her by the hair, and pommelled her to some tune, 'till that inhuman wretch, Belfond, turned me out of doors, and sent her away in a chair.

Lucia. Oh, wicked creature! Are you not afraid the earth should open and swallow you up? As I hope to be saved, I never saw her.

Term. Though young in years, yet old in impudence! Did I not pursue thee since in the street, till you run into Belfond's arms just before his father's house? or I had marked thee for a young whore.

Lucia. As I hope to live, sir, 'tis all false, every word and tittle of it. I know not what she means.

Att. Have I bestowed so much, and taken so much care in thy education, to have no other fruit but this?

Lucia. O Lord, sir! Why, will you believe this wicked woman?

Att. No, young impudence! I believe you. What made you ready to swoon at the sight of this lady, but your guilt?

Lucia. She mistakes me for some other, as she did to-day when she pursued me, to have killed me; which made me tremble at the sight of her now.

Att. And yet you never saw her before! I am convinced. Go, wicked wretch, go home: this news will kill thy mother. I'll to my chamber, and follow thee.

Lucia. But if I ever see her, or you either, to be locked from my dear Belfond, I shall deserve whatever you can do to me. [*Exit.*

Att. Madam, I beseech you make as few words as you can of this.

Term. I had much rather, for my own honour, have concealed it. But I shall say no more, provided you will keep her from him.

Att. I warrant you, madam. I'll take a course with

Enter CHEATLY.

Cheat. Madam, your most humble servant. You see I am punctual to my word.

Term. You are, sir.

Cheat. Come, madam ; your lodging, furniture, and everything are ready ; let's lose no time. I'll wait on you thither, where we will consult about our affairs.

Term. Come on ; it is a rare design ; and, if it succeeds, I shall sufficiently be revenged on my ungrateful devil.

Cheat. I'll warrant the success. [Exeunt.]

[SCENE IV. ?]

Enter ISABELLA and TERESIA.

Isab. We must be very careful of this book ; my uncle, or our dame gouvernante, will burn it, if they find it.

Teres. We cannot have a pleasant or a witty book, but they serve it so. My father loads us with books, such as "The Trial of Man, in the Isle of Man, or Manshire" ; "A Treatise on Sabbath-breakers" ; and "Health out-drinking, or Life out-healthing Wretches" ; "A Caustic, or Corrosive, for a Seared Conscience."

Isab. "A Sovereign Ointment for a Wounded Soul" ; "A Cordial for a sick Sinner" ; "The Nothingness of Good Works" ; "Waxed Boot-Grace, for the Sussex Ways of Affliction" ; and a deal of such stuff. But all novels, romances, or poetry, except Quarles and Withers, are an abomination. Well, this is a jewel, if we can keep it.

Enter RUTH behind them.

Anger, in hasty words or blows,
Itself discharges on our foes ;
And sorrow, too, finds some relief
In tears, which wait upon our grief :
Thus every passion, but fond love,

Teres. 'Tis sweet poetry ; there is a pleasing charm in all he writes.

Ruth (*snatching the book*). Yea, there is a charm of Satan's in it. 'Tis vanity and darkness. This book hateth, and is contrary to the light ; and ye hate the light.

Isab. That's much ; and this evening a little before night, thou blamedst us for looking out of the window, and threatenedst to shut the painted sashes.

Teres. Now, if thou shut'st those, thou hatest the light, and not we.

Ruth. Look thee, Teresia, thou art wanton, and so is thy cousin Isabella ; ye seek temptation ; you look out of the casement to pick and cull young men, whereby to feed the lust of the eye : ye may not do it. And look thee, Isabel and Teresia, if you open the casements once more, I will place ye in the back rooms, and lock the fore rooms up.

Teres. We will obey thee, Ruth.

Isab. We will not resist thy power ; but prithee leave us that book.

Ruth. No, it is wanton, and treateth of love ; I will instantly commit it to the flames. [*Exit.*

Isab. Shame on this old wall-eyed hypocrite ! she is the strictest sort of gaoler.

Teres. We are narrowly looked to, as if we had been clapped up for treason ; we are kept from books, pen, ink and paper.

Isab. Well, it is a most painful life to dissemble constantly.

Teres. 'Tis well we are often alone, to unbend to one another ; one had as good be a player, and act continually, else.

Isab. I can never persuade myself that religion can consist in scurvy out-of-fashion clothes, stiff constrained behaviour, and sour countenances.

Teres. A tristful aspect, looking always upon one's

Isab. And when one walks abroad, not to turn one's head to the right or left, but hold it straight forward, like an old blind mare.

Teres. True religion must make one cheerful, and affect one with the most ravishing joy, which must appear in the face too.

Isab. My good mother had the government, and brought me up to better things, as thy good aunt did thee.

Teres. But we can make no use of our education under this tyranny.

Isab. If we should sing or dance, 'twere worse than murder.

Teres. But of all things, why do they keep such a stir to keep us from the conversation of mankind? Sure there must be more in it than we can imagine; and that makes one have more mind to try.

Isab. Thou hast been so unquiet in thy sleep of late, and so given to sigh, and get alone when thou art awake; I fancy thou dost imagine somewhat of it.

Teres. Ah, rogue! and I have observed the same in thee. Canst thou not guess at love? Come, confess, and I'll tell all.

Isab. Sometimes in my dreams, methinks I am in love; then a certain youth comes to me, and I grow chill, and pant, and feel a little pain: but 'tis the prettiest thing, methinks: and then I awake, and blush, and am afraid.

Teres. Very pretty: and when I am awake, when I see one gentleman, methinks I could look through him: and my heart beats, beats like the drums in the camp.

Isab. I dare not ask who 'tis, for fear it should be my man; for there are two come often to our church, that stare at us continually, and one of them is he.

Teres. I have observed them: one, who sate by us at church knew them by their names; I am for one of them too.

Teres. If it be my man thou lik'st, I'll kill thee.

Isab. And if thou lov'st my man, we must not live together.

Teres. Name him.

Isab. Do thou name first.

Teres. Let's write their names.

Isab. Agreed : we each have a black-lead pen.

[*They write their papers and give them to one another, at which they both speak together and start.*]

Teres. Truman ! Mercy on me !

Isab. Belfond ! O Heavens !

Teres. What's this I see ? Would I were blind !

Isab. Oh, my Teresia !

Teres. Get thee from me.

Isab. 'Tis as it should be ; I wrote the wrong name, on purpose to discover who was your man more clearly ; the other's my beloved. Belfond's my heart's delight.

Teres. Say'st thou so, my girl ! good wits jump. I had the same thought with thee. Now 'tis out, Truman for me ; and methinks they keep such a staring at us, if we contrive to meet them, we need not despair.

Isab. Nay, they come not for devotion, that's certain ; I see that in their eyes. Oh that they were ordained to free us from this odious jail !

Enter RUTH and TRUMAN, disguised.

Ruth. Go into your chamber ; here is a man cometh about business : ye may not see him.

Teres. We go : come, cousin.

Ruth. Come, friend : let us retire also. [Exeunt.]





ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*Enter BELFOND JUNIOR and LUCIA*



LUC. I never more must see the face of a relation.

Belf. Jun. I warrant thee, my pretty rogue, I'll put thee into that condition the best of all thy kindred shall visit thee, and make their court to thee; thou shalt spark it in the boxes, shine at the Park, and make all the young fellows in the town run mad for thee. Thou shalt never want, while I have anything.

Luc. I could abandon all the world for thee; if I could think that thou wouldst love me always.

Belf. Jun. Thou hast so kindly obliged me, I shall never cease to love thee.

Luc. Pray Heaven I do not repent of it. You were kind to Mrs. Termagant; and sure it must be some barbarous usage which thus provokes her now to all this malice.

Belf. Jun. She was debauched by the most nauseous coxcomb, the most silly beau and shape about the town; and had cuckolded him with several before I had her. She was indeed handsome, but the most froward, ill-natured creature; always murmuring or scolding, perpetually jealous and exceptious, ever thinking to work her ends by hectoring and daring

you were the first that ever had my heart, and you shall be the last.

Belf. Jun. My dear, I know I had thy virgin heart, and I'll preserve it. But for her, her most diverting minutes were unpleasant. Yet for all her malice, which you see, I still maintain her.

Luc. Ungrateful creature! She is indeed a fury. Should'st thou once take thy love from me, I never should use such ways: I silently should mourn and pine away; but never think of once offending thee.

Belf. Jun. Thou art the prettiest, sweetest, softest creature! and all the tenderest joys that wait on love are ever with thee.

Luc. Oh, this is charming kindness! May all the joys on earth be still with thee!

Belf. Jun. [*aside*]. Now here's a mischief on the other side; for how can a good-natured man think of ever quitting so tender and so kind a mistress, whom no respect, but love, has thrown into my arms? And yet I must: but I will better her condition.—Oh, how does my friend?

Enter TRUMAN.

Luc. Oh lord! Who's here?

Belf. Jun. My dear, go to the lodging I have prepared for thee; thou wilt be safe, and I'll wait on thee soon. Who's there?

Enter Servants.

Do you wait on this lady's chair, you know whither.

Tru. Thou art a pretty fellow, Belfond, to take thy pleasure thus, and put thy friend upon the damnedst drudgery.

Belf. Jun. What drudgery? a little dissembling.

Tru. Why, that were bad enough, to dissemble myself an ass; but to dissemble love, nay lust, is the most irksome task a man can undergo.

Tru. 'Tis done! The business is done! Whip on your habit; make no words.

Belf. Jun. I'll put it on in my dressing-room. This news transports me!

Tru. If you had undergone what I have done, 'twould have humbled you. I have enjoyed a lady; but I had as lief have had a Lancashire witch, just after she had alighted from a broom-staff: I have been uncivil, and enjoyed the gouvernante in most lewd dalliance.

Belf. Jun. Thou art a brave fellow, and makest nothing of it.

Tru. Nothing? 'Sdeath! I had rather have stormed a half-moon: I had more pleasure at the battle of Mons.

Belf. Jun. But hast thou done our work, as well as hers?

Tru. I have; for after the enjoyment of her person had led me into some familiarity with her, I proposed, she accepted; for she is covetous as well as amorous. And she has so far wrought for us, that we shall have an interview with our mistresses; whom, she says, we shall find very inclinable; and she has promised this night to deliver 'em into our hands.

Belf. Jun. Thou art a rare friend to me, and to thyself. Now, farewell all the vanity of this lewd town, at once I quit it all. Dear rogue, let's in.

Tru. Come, in, in, and dress in your habit. [*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE II.]

Enter SIR WILLIAM, SIR EDWARD, and SCRAPEALL.

Scrape. Look ye, Sir William, I am glad you like my niece; and I hope also that she may look lovely in your son's eyes.

Sir Edw. No doubt but he will be extremely taken with her: indeed both she and your daughter are very beautiful.

Sir Will. He like her! What's matter whether he like her or no? Is it not enough for him, that I do?

That were to have him be the father, and me the son.
But indeed they are both very handsome.

Scrape. Let me tell you both, Sir William, and Sir Edward, beauty is but vanity, a mere nothing ; but they have that which will not fade ; they have grace.

Sir Edw. They look like pretty spirited witty girls.

[*Aside.*

Scrape. I am sorry I must leave ye so soon : I thought to have bidden ye to dinner, but I am to pay down a sum of money upon a mortgage this afternoon : farewell.

Sir Will. Farewell, Mr. Scrapeall.

Sir Edw. Pray meet my brother at my house at dinner.

Scrape. Thank you, Sir Edward ; I know not but I may.

[*Exit.*

Sir Edw. The person of this girl is well chosen for your son, if she were not so precise and pure.

Sir Will. Prithee, what matter what she is ; has she not fifteen thousand pounds clear ?

Sir Edw. For a husband to differ in religion from a wife !

Sir Will. What, with fifteen thousand pound ?

Sir Edw. A precise wife will think herself so pure, she will be apt to contemn her husband.

Sir Will. Ay, but fifteen thousand pound, brother.

Sir Edw. You know how intractable misguided zeal and spiritual pride are.

Sir Will. What, with fifteen thousand pound !

Sir Edw. I would not willingly my son should have her.

Sir Will. Not with fifteen thousand pound ?

Sir Edw. I see there's no answer to be given to fifteen thousand pound.

Sir Will. A pox o' this godly knave ! it should have been twenty.

Sir Edw. Nor would I buy a wife for my son.

Sir Will. Not if you could have her a good pennyworth ? Your son, quoth he ! He is like to make a fine husband. For all your precious son——

Sir Edw. Again, brother?

Sir Will. Look you, brother, you fly out so. Pray, brother, be not passionate; passion drowns one's parts. Let us calmly reason; I have fresh matter; have but patience, and hear me speak.

Sir Edw. Well, brother, go on; for I see I might as soon stop a tide.

Sir Will. To be calm and patient; your jewel, though he denied that outrage in Dorset Court, yet he committed it, and was last night hurried before the Lord Chief Justice for it.

Sir Edw. It cannot be, on my certain knowledge. I could convince him, but it is not time. [*Aside.*

Sir Will. What a devil! Are all the world mistaken but you?

Sir Edw. He was with me all the evening.

Sir Will. Why, he got bail immediately, and came to you. Ounds, I never saw such a man in my life!

Sir Edw. I am assured of the contrary.

Sir Will. Death and hell! you make me stark mad: you will send me to Bedlam. You will not believe your own senses: I'll hold you a thousand pound.

Sir Edw. Brother, remember passion drowns one's parts.

Sir Will. Well, I am tame, I am cool.

Sir Edw. I'll hold you a hundred; which is enough for one brother to win of another.

Enter Attorney.

And here's your own attorney come opportunely enough to hold stakes. I'll bind it with ten.

Sir Will. Done!

Sir Edw. Why, I saw your man Roger, and he says your son found there a rascal that went by his name.

Attor. Oh, Sir William, I am undone, ruined, made a miserable man.

Sir Will. What's the matter, man?

client to me, I have reason to curse one of your family that has ruined mine.

Sir Will. Pray explain yourself.

Attor. Oh, sir, your wicked son! your most libidinous son——

Sir Will. Look you, brother! D'ye hear? d'ye hear? Do you answer?

Attor. Has corrupted, debauched my only daughter, whom I had brought up with all the care and charge I could: who was the hopes, the joy of all our family.

Sir Will. Here's a son! Here's a rare son! Here's a hopeful son! And he were mine, I'd lash him with a dog-whip: I'd cool his courage.

Sir Edw. How do you know it is he?

Attor. I have a witness of it, that saw her rise from his bed the other day morning. And last night she ran away to him, and they have lain at a private lodging.

Sir Edw. Be well assured ere you conclude; for there's a rascal that has taken my son's name, and has swaggered in and about Whitefriars with Cheatly, and that gang of rogues, whom my son will take a course with.

Attor. Oh, sir, I am too well assured. My wife tears her hair; and I, for my part, shall run distracted.

Sir Will. Oh, wicked rascal! Oh, my poor Tim! My dear boy Tim! I think each day a year till I see thee.

Sir Edw. Sir, I am extremely sorry for this, if it be so; but let me beg of you, play the part of a wise man; blaze not this dishonour abroad, and you shall have all the reparation the case is capable of.

Sir Will. Reparation for making his daughter a whore! What, a pox, can he give her her maidenhead again?

Sir Edw. Money, which shall not be wanting, will stop that witness's mouth. And I will give your daughter such a fortune, that were what you believe

Attor. You speak like the worthy gentleman the world thinks you ; but there can be no salve for this sore.

Sir Will. Why, you are enough to damn forty sons, if you had them : you encourage them to whore : you are fit to breed up youth.

Sir Edw. You are mad. But pray, sir, let me intreat you to go home, and I will wait upon you ; and we will consult how to make the best of this misfortune ; in which, I assure you, I have a great share.

Attor. I will submit to your wise advice, sir. My grief had made me forget ; here is a letter comes out of the country for you. [Exit Attorney.

Sir Will. For me ! 'tis welcome. Now for news from my dear boy ! Now you shall hear, brother : he is a son indeed.

Sir Edw. Yes, a very hopeful one ; I will not undeceive him 'till Ned has tried once more to recover him.

Sir Will. [reads]. " On the tenth of this month, your son, my young master, about two of the clock in the morning, rode out with his man Lolpoop ; and notwithstanding all the search and enquiry we can make (O Heaven !) he cannot be found or heard of."

[He drops the letter, not able to hold it.

Sir Edw. How's this ?

Sir Will. Oh, my poor boy ! He is robbed and murdered, and buried in some ditch, or flung into some pond. Oh, I shall never see thee more, dear Tim ? The joy and the support of all my life ! The only comfort which I had on earth !

Sir Edw. Have patience, brother : 'tis nothing but a little ramble in your absence.

Sir Will. Oh no ; he durst not ramble. He was the dutifullest child ! I shall never see his face again ! Look you, he goes on : " We have searched, and made enquiry in three adjacent counties, and no tidings can be heard of him." What have I done that Heaven

Sir Edw. What if, after all, this son should be he that has made all this noise in Whitefriars, for which mine has been so blamed?

Sir Will. My son! my son play such pranks? That's likely! One so strictly, so soberly educated! One that's educated your way cannot do otherwise.

Enter ROGER.

Roger. Sir, sir, sir; mercy upon me! here's my young master's man, Lolpoop, coming along in the streets with a wench.

Enter LOLPOOP, leading BETTY under the arm.

Sir Will. O Heaven! What say you?

Sir Edw. Now it works. Ha, ha, ha! [*To himself.*

[*SIR WILLIAM lays hold on LOLPOOP ere he or she sees him.*

Betty. How now! What have you to say to my friend, my dear?

[*SIR WILLIAM and LOLPOOP start, and stand amazed at one another; and after a great pause, SIR WILLIAM falls upon LOLPOOP, beats the whore, beats ROGER, strikes at his brother, and lays about him like a madman; the rabble get all about him.*

Sir Will. Sirrah! Rogue! Dog! Villain! Whore! And you rogue, rogue! Confound the world! Oh, that the world were all on fire!

Sir Edw. Brother, for shame, be more temperate: are you a madman?

Sir Will. Plague o' your dull philosophy!

Sir Edw. The rabble are gathered together about you.

Sir Will. Villain! Rogue! Dog! Toad! Serpent! Where's my son? Sirrah, you have robbed him, and murdered him.

[*He beats LOLPOOP, who roars out murder.*

[*He holds Betty. Her son is alive and alive like*

Sir Will. What say you, sirrah? In London? And is he well? Thanks be to Heaven for that! Where is he, sirrah?

Lolp. He is in Whitefriars, with Mr. Cheatly, his cousin Shamwell, and Captain Hackum.

[SIR WILLIAM pauses, as amazed: then beats him again.]

Sir Will. And you rogue! you damned dog! would you suffer him to keep such company, and commit such villainous actions?

Lolp. Hold, hold, hold, I pray you, sir: I am but a servant; how could I help it, marry?

Sir Will. You could not help being with a whore yourself? Sirrah, sirrah, sirrah! Here, honest mob, course this whore to some purpose. A whore! a whore! a whore!

[She runs out, the rabble run after, and tear her, crying, a whore! a whore!]

Sir Edw. This is wisely done! If they murder her, you'll be hanged: I am in commission for Middlesex; I must see to appease them.

Sir Will. Sirrah! Rogue! Bring me to my son instantly, or I'll cut your throat. [Exeunt.]

[SCENE III.]

Enter ISABELLA, TERESIA, and RUTH.

Isab. Dear Ruth, thou dost for ever oblige us.

Teres. And so much, that none but our own mothers could ever do it more.

Ruth. Oblige yourselves, and be not silly, coy, and nice: strike me when the iron's hot, I say. They have great estates, and are both friends; I know both their families and conditions.

Enter BELFONT JUN. and TRUMAN.

Here they are: welcome, friends.

Tru. How dost thou?

Ruth. These are the damsels: I will retire and watch

Belf. Jun. Look thee, Isabella, I come to confer with thee, in a matter which concerneth us both, if thou be'st free.

Isab. Friend, 'tis like I am.

Tru. And mine with thee is of the same nature.

Teres. Proceed.

Belf. Jun. Something within me whispereth that we were made as helps for one another.

Teres. They act very well, cousin.

Isab. For young beginners. Come, leave off your Canaanitish dialect, and talk like the inhabitants of this world.

Teres. We are as arrant hypocrites as the best of you.

Isab. We were bred otherwise than you see, and are able to hear you talk like gentlemen.

Teres. You come to our meeting like sparks and beaux, and I never could perceive much devotion in you.

Isab. 'Tis such a pain to dissemble, that I am resolved I'll never do it, but when I must.

Belf. Jun. Dear madam, I could wish all forms were laid aside betwixt us. But, in short, I am most infinitely in love with you, and must be for ever miserable, if I go without you.

Isab. A frank and hearty declaration, which you make with so much confidence, I warrant you have been used to it.

Tru. There is not a difficulty in the world which I would stop at to obtain your love, the only thing on earth could make me happy.

Teres. And you are as much in earnest now, as you were when you came first to us even now?

Isab. That's well urged: cannot you gentlemen counterfeit love, as well as religion?

Belf. Jun. Love is so natural, it cannot be affected.

Teres. And was this the reason you frequented our parish church?

Belf. Jun. Could you think our business was to hear your teacher spin out an hour over a velvet cushion?

Isab. Profane men! I warrant they came to ogle.

Tru. Even so: our eyes might tell you what we came for.

Belf. Jun. In short, dear madam, our opportunities are like to be so few, your confinement being so close, that 'tis fit to make use of this; 'tis not your fortune which I aim at; my uncle will make a settlement equal to it, were it more; but 'tis your charming person.

Isab. And you would have me a fine forward lady, to love extempore?

Belf. Jun. Madam, you have but few minutes to make use of, and therefore should improve those few. Your uncle has sold you for £5,000, and, for aught I know, you have not this night good for your deliverance.

Tru. Consider, ladies, if you had not better trust a couple of honest gentlemen, than an old man, that makes his market of you: for I can tell you, you, though his own daughter, are to be sold too.

Teres. But for all that, our consents are to be had.

Belf. Jun. You can look for nothing but a more strict confinement, which must follow your refusal. Now, if you have the courage to venture an escape, we are the knights that will relieve you.

Tru. I have an estate, madam, equal to your fortune, but I have nothing can deserve your love. But I'll procure your freedom; then use it as you please.

Belf. Jun. If you are unwilling to trust us, you can trust your governess, whom you shall have with you.

Isab. And what would you and the world say of us for this.

Belf. We should adore you. And I am apt to think the world would not condemn your choice.

Enter RUTH.

Ruth. I see Mr. Scrapeall coming at the end of the street. Begone; I'll bring them to your chamber in the Temple this evening. Haste, haste out at the back-door.

Belf. Jun. This is most unfortunate!

Tru. Dear madam, let me seal my vows.

• *Ruth.* Go, go: begone, begone, friends. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter SCRAPEALL, crosses the stage; enter Mrs. TER-
MAGANT and her Brother.*

Term. You see, brother, we have dogged Belfont, till we saw him enter the house of this scrivener with his friend Truman, both in disguises; which, with what we have heard even now at the neighbouring ale-house, convinces me that 'tis he is to marry the rich niece.

Bro. They say she is to be married to the son of Sir William Belfond, and that Sir William gives a great sum of money to her uncle for her; by this it should seem to be the elder son, and not our enemy, who is designed for her.

Term. If so, the villain would not at full day go thither.

Bro. But 'tis in a disguise.

Term. With that I suppose the son pretends to be a puritan too, or she would not have him; it must be he. And if you will do as I direct you, I warrant I'll break off his match; and by that work an exquisite piece of revenge.

Bro. I am wholly at your dispose.

Term. Now is the time, the door opens; pursue me with a drawn dagger, with all the seeming fury imaginable, now, as the old man comes out.

[*SCRAPEALL passes over the stage. Brother pursues her with a drawn dagger; she runs and gets into the house, and claps the door after her.*

Bro. Where is the jade? Deliver her to me, I'll cut her in pieces. Deliver her to me, I'll cut her in pieces. Well, you will

Enter within RUTH, TERESIA, ISABELLA, Mrs.
TERMAGANT.

Term. Oh, oh! where is the murderer? where is he?
I die with fear, I die!

Ruth. Prithee, woman, comfort thyself; no man shall
hurt thee here. Take a sup of this bottle.

[*She pulls out a silver strong-water bottle.*]

Teres. Thou art safe.

Isab. We will defend thee here as in a castle. But
what is the occasion of this man's fury?

Term. You are so generous in giving me this succour,
and promising my defence, that I am resolved not to
conceal it from you: though I must confess I have no
reason to boast of it; but I hope your charity will
interpret it as well as you can on my side.

Ruth. Go on; thou need'st not fear.

Term. Know then, I am a gentlewoman, whose
parents dying when I was sixteen, left me a moderate
fortune, yet able to maintain me like their daughter. I
chose an aunt my guardian, one of those jolly widows
who love gaming, and have great resort in the evenings
at their houses.

Ruth. Good: proceed.

Term. There it was my misfortune to be acquainted
with a gentleman, whose face, air, mien, shape, wit, and
breeding, not I alone, but the whole town admires.

Ruth. Very good.

Term. By all his looks, his gestures, and addresses, he
seemed in love with me: the joy that I conceived at
this I wanted running to conceal, but he must needs
perceive it flash in my eyes, and kindle in my face. He
soon began to court me in such sweet, such charming
words, as would betray a more experienced heart than
mine.

Ruth. Hum: very well; she speaks notably.

Term. There was but little left of my fortune.

ready to give up the fort ; yet I held out as long as I could make defence.

Ruth. Good lack-a-day ! Some men have strange charms, it is confessed.

Term. Yet I was safe by solemn mutual oaths, in private, contracted : he would have it private because he feared to offend an uncle, from whom he had great expectance ; but now came all my misery.

Ruth. Alack ! alack ! I warrant he was false.

Term. False as a crocodile : he watched the fatal minute, and he found it, and greedily seized upon me, when I trusted to his honour and his oaths ; he still swore on that he would marry me, and I sinned on. In short, I had a daughter by him, now three years old, as true a copy as e'er Nature drew ; beauteous and witty to a miracle.

Ruth. Nay, men are faithless, I can speak it.

Teres. Poor lady ! I am strangely concerned for her.

Isab. She was a fool to be caught in so common a snare.

Term. From time to time he swore he would marry me ; though I must think I am his wife as much as any priest can make me ; but still he found excuses about his uncle. I would have patiently waited till his uncle's death had he been true ; but he has thrown me off, abandoned me, without so much as a pretended crime.

Ruth. Alack, and well-a-day ! It makes me weep.

Term. But 'tis for an attorney's daughter, whom he keeps, and now is fond of ; while he treats me with all contempt and hatred.

Isab. Though she was a fool, yet he's a base inhuman fellow.

Teres. To scorn and hate her for her love to him.

Term. By this means, my dishonour, which had been yet concealed, became so public, my brother coming from the wars of Hungary, having heard all, has this day

and now by accident he spied me by your house, I having fled the place where I had lodged, for fear of him; and here the bloody man would have killed me for the dishonour done to his family, which never yet was blemished.

Ruth. Get the Chief Justice's warrant, and bind him to the peace.

Teres. She tells her story well.

Isab. 'Tis a very odd one; but she expresses it so sensibly, I cannot but believe her.

Term. If they do not ask me who this is, I have told my tale in vain. [*Aside.*] Now, ladies, I hope you have charity enough to pardon the weakness of a poor young woman, who suffers shame enough within.

Teres. We shall be glad to do you what kindness we can.

Term. Oh, had you seen this most bewitching person, so beautiful, witty, and well-bred, and full of most gentleman-like qualities, you would be the readier to have compassion on me.

Isab. Pray, who is it?

Term. Alas, 'tis no secret; it is Belfond, who calls Sir Edward Belfond father, but is his nephew.

Isab. What do I hear? Was ever woman so unfortunate as I in her first love?

Teres. 'Tis most unlucky.

Term. That is the niece: I see 'twas he who was to marry her. [*Aside.*]

Isab. But I am glad I have thus early heard it: I'll never see his face more.

Ruth. All this is false: he is a pious man, and true professor—this vile woman will break the match off and undo my hopes. [*Aside.*]

Term. 'Tis as I thought—he is a ranting blade, a royster of the town.

Ruth. Come, you are an idle woman, and belie him; begone out of the doors: there's the back way.

Term. I am obliged enough in the present defence you gave me: I intended not to trouble you long; but Heaven can witness what I say is true.

Isab. Do you hear, cousin! 'Tis most certain I'll ne'er see him more.

Ruth. Go, wicked woman, go: what evil spirit sent thee hither? I say, begone.

Term. I go—I care not what she says; it works where I would have it—your servant, ladies. [*Exit.*]

Ruth. Go, go, thou wicked slanderer.

Teres. See him but once, to hear what he can say in his defence.

Isab. Yes, to hear him lie, as all the sex will: persuade me not, I'm fixed.

Ruth. Look thee, Isabella——

Isab. I am resolved. [*Exit ISABELLA hastily.*]

Teres. Dear Ruth, thou dearest friend, whom we once took for our most cruel gaoler, let's follow, and help me to convince her of her error; but I am resolved, if she be stubborn to undo herself, she shall not ruin me. I will escape.

Ruth. Let us persuade her.

[SCENE IV. ?]

Enter BELFOND SENIOR and HACKUM.

Belf. Sen. Captain, call all my servants; why don't they wait?

Enter MARGARET and Mrs. HACKUM with a Caudle.
Oh, my pure blowen! my convenient! my tackle!

Marg. How dost thou, my dear?

Mrs. Hack. I have brought you a caudle here; there's ambergris in it; 'tis a rare refreshing, strengthening thing.

Belf. Sen. What, adad, you take me for a bridegroom! I scorn a caudle; give me some cherry-brandy, I'll drink her health in a bumper: do thee eat this, child.

Mrs. Hack. I have that at hand, here, sir.

Enter Captain HACKUM and Servants.

Belf. Sen. Come, my dear natural, here's a bumper of cherry-brandy to thy health ; but first let me kiss thee, my dear rogue !

Enter Sir WILLIAM.

Sir Will. Some thunderbolt light on my head ! what's this I see ?

Belf. Sen. My father !

Enter CHEATLY and SHAMWELL.

Sir Will. Hey, here's the whole kennel of hell-hounds !

Cheat. Bear up to him ; bow-wow.

Sham. Do not flinch ; bow-wow.

Belf. Sen. Bow-wow, bow-wow.

Sir Will. Most impudent, abandoned rascal ! Let me go, let me come at him. Audacious varlet ! how durst thou look at me ?

[*He endeavours to fly at his son. Footmen hold him.*]

Belf. Sen. Go, strike your dogs, and call them names ; you have nothing to do with me, I am of full age ; and, I thank Heaven, am gotten loose from your yoke. Don't think to put upon me. I'll be kept no longer like a prigster, a silly country put, fit for nothing but to be a bubble, a caravan, or so.

Sir Will. A most perfect, downright, canting rogue ! Am I not your father, sirrah ? Sirrah, am I not ?

Belf. Sen. Yes, and tenant for life to my estate in tail ; and I'll look to you, that you commit no waste. What a pox ! Did you think to nose me for ever, as the saying is ? I am not so dark neither ; I am sharp, sharp as a needle, I can smoke now, as soon as another.

Sir Will. Let me come at him.

Cheat. So long as you forbear all violence you are safe ; but if you strike here, we command the Friars, and we will raise the posse.

Sir Will. O villain ! Thou notorious undoer of

part of me ! Have I, from thy first swadling, nourished thee, and bred thee up with care ?

Belf. Sen. Yes, with care to keep your money from me, and breed me in the greatest ignorance, fit for your slave, and not your son ; I had been finely dark, if I had stayed at home.

Sir Will. Were you not educated like a gentleman ?

Belf. Sen. No ; like a grazier, or a butcher. If I had stayed in the country, I had never seen such a nab, a rum nab, such a modish porker, such spruce and neat accoutrements ; here is a tattle, here's a fable, and here's the cole, the ready, the rhino, the darby. I have a lusty cod, old prig, I'd have thee know, and am very rhinocercical ; here are megs and smelts good store, decusses and Georges ; the land is entailed, and I will have my smack of it while I am young, adad, I will. Ha !

Sir Will. Some mountain cover me, and hide my shame for ever from the world ! Did I not beget thee, rogue ?

Belf. Sen. What know I whether you did or not ? But 'twas not to use me like a slave ; but I am sharp and smoky ; I had been purely bred, had I been ruled by you ; I should never have known these worthy, ingenious gentlemen, my dear friends ; all this fine language had been heathen Greek to me, and I had ne'er been able to have cut a sham or banter while I had lived, adad. Odsookers, I know myself, and will have nothing to do with you.

Sir Will. I am astonished !

Belf. Sen. Shall my younger brother keep his coach and equipage, and shine like a spruce prig, and I be your baily in the country ? Hi, La Mar ! bid my coach be ready at the door ; I'll make him know I am elder brother, and I will have the better liveries ; and I am resolved to manage my natural, my pure blowen, my convenient, my peculiar, my tackle, my purest pure, as

Sir Will. A most confirmed Alsatian rogue. [*Aside.*] Thou most ungracious wretch! to break off from me, at such a time when I had provided a wife for you, a pretty young lady, with fifteen thousand pound down; have settled a great jointure upon her, and a large estate in present on you; the writings all sealed, and nothing wanting but you, whom I had sent for post out of the country, to marry her!

Belf. Sen. Very likely, that you, who have cudgelled me from my cradle, and made me your slave, and grudged me a crown in my pocket, should do all this.

Cheat. Believe him not; there's not one word of truth in it.

Sham. This is a trick to get you in his power.

Sir Will. The writings are all at my attorney's in the Temple. You may go with me, and see 'em all; and if you will comply, I'll pardon what is past, and marry you.

Belf. Sen. No, no; I am sharp, as I told you, and smoky; you shall not put upon me; I understand your shams. But, to talk fairly, in all occurrences of this nature, which either may or may not be, according to the different accidents which often intervene upon several opportunities, from whence we may collect either good or bad, according to the nature of things themselves; and forasmuch as whether they be good or bad concerns only the understanding, so far forth as it employs its faculties: now since all this is premised, let us come to the matter in hand.

Sir Will. Prodigious impudence! Oh, devil! I'll to my Lord Chief Justice, and with his tipstaff I'll do your business, rogues! Dogs and villains! I will.

[*Exit in fury.*]

Cheat. This was bravely carried on!

Sham. Most admirably!

Belf. Sen. An' wasn't that? D. v. J. d. s. i. d.

Cheat. Rarely : but a word in private, my resplendent prig? You see your father resolves to put some trick upon you ; be beforehand with him, and marry this fortune I have prepared ; lose no time, but see her, and treat with her, if you like her, as soon as you can.

Belf. Sen. You are in the right ; let not my blowen hear a word. I'll to her instantly.

Cheat. Shamwell and I'll go and prepare her for a visit ; you know the place.

Belf. Sen. I do : come along. [*Exeunt.*

[SCENE V. ?]

*Enter CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, and Mrs. TERMAGANT
in her fine Lodgings.*

Cheat. Madam, you must carry yourself somewhat stately, but courteously, to the bubble.

Sham. Somewhat reservedly, and yet so as to give him hopes.

Term. I warrant you, let me alone ; and if I effect this business, you are the best friends ; such friends as I could never yet expect. 'Twill be an exquisite revenge.

Cheat. He comes. Come, noble Squire.

Enter BELFOND SENIOR.

Madam, this is the gentleman whom I would recommend to your ladyship's favour, who is ambitious of kissing your hand.

Belf. Sen. Yes, madam, as Mr. Cheatly says, I am ambitious of kissing your hand, and your lip too, madam ; for I vow to Gad, madam, there is not a person in the world, madam, has a greater honour for your person. And, madam, I assure you I am a person——

Term. My good friend, Mr. Cheatly, with whom I intrust the management of my small fortune——

Cheat. Small fortune ! Nay, it is a large one.

Term. Has told me of your family and character.

To your name I am no stranger, nor to your estate, though this is the first time I have had the honour to see your person.

Belf Sen. Hold, good madam, the honour lies on my side ; she's a rare lady, ten times handsomer than my blowen, (and here's a lodging and furniture for a Queen !)—Madam, if your ladyship please to accept of my affection in an honourable way, you shall find I am no put, no country prigster, nor shall ever want the megs, the smelts, decusses and Georges, the ready and the rhino : I am rhinocercical.

Term. I want nothing, sir ; Heaven be thanked.

Sham. Her worst servants eat in plate ; and her maids have all silver' chamber-pots.

Belf Sen. Madam, I beg your pardon, I am somewhat boosy ; I have been drinking bumpers and facers till I am almost clear. I have £3,000 a year, and £20,000 worth of wood, which I can turn into cole and ready, and my estate ne'er the worse ; there's only the encumbrance of an old fellow upon it, and I shall break his heart suddenly.

Term. This is a weighty matter, and requires advice ; nor is it a sudden work to persuade my heart to love. I have my choice of fortunes.

Belf Sen. Very like, madam. But Mr. Cheatly and my cousin Shamwell can tell you that my occasions require haste, d'ye see ! And therefore I desire you to resolve as soon as conveniently you can.

[A noise of a tumult without, and blowing a horn.

Cheat. What's this I hear ?

Sham. They are up in the Friars. Pray Heaven the Sheriffs' officers be not come.

Cheat. 'Slife, 'tis so ! shift for yourselves. 'Squire, let me conduct you. This is your wicked father with officers. [Exit.

[SCENE V. ?]

Enter SIR WILLIAM BELFOND, and a Tipstaff, with the constable and his watchmen; and against them the posse of the Friars drawn up, bankrupts hurrying to escape.

• *Sir Will.* Are you mad, to resist the tipstaff, the king's authority?

[*They cry out, "An arrest!" Several flock to them with all sorts of weapons. Women with fire-forks, spits, faring-shovels, &c.*

Enter CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, BELFOND SENIOR, and HACKUM.

Cheat. We are too strong for 'em. Stand your ground.

Sir Will. We demand that same Squire, Cheatly, Shamwell, and Bully Hackman. Deliver them up, and all the rest of you are safe.

Hack. Not a man.

Sir Will. Nay then, have at you.

Tipst. I charge you in the king's name, all to assist me.

Rabble. Fall on.

[*Rabble beat the constable, and the rest run into the Temple. Tipstaff runs away. They take Sir WILLIAM prisoner.*

Cheat. Come on, thou wicked author of this broil, you are our prisoner.

Sir Will. Let me go, rogue.

Sham. Now we have you in the Temple, we'll show you the pump first.

Sir Will. Dogs! rogues! villains!

Sham. To the pump, to the pump!

Hack. Pump him, pump him!

Ben. Sen. Ah, pump him, pump him, old prig!

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR, TRUMAN, and several Gentlemen, Porter of the Temple, and BELFOND'S Footmen.

Belf. Jun. What's the matter here?

Tru. The rabble have caught a bailiff.

Belf. Jun. Death and hell! 'tis my father! 'tis a gentleman, my father. Gentlemen, I beseech you lend me your hands to his rescue.

Tru. Come on, rascal! Have we caught you? We'll make you an example.

[*All draw, and fall upon the rabble. BELFOND SENIOR runs first away. The Templars beat them, and take CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, and HACKUM prisoners.*]

Belf. Jun. Here! Where are the officers of the Temple? Porter, do you shut the gates into Whitefriars?

Port. I will, sir.

Belf. Jun. Here's a guinea among ye. See these three rogues well pumped, and let 'em go through the whole course.

Cheat. Hold, hold, I am a gentleman.

Sham. I am your cousin.

Hack. Hold, hold, scoundrel; I am a captain.

Belf. Jun. Away with 'em!

Sir Will. Away with 'em! Dear son, I am infinitely obliged to you: I ask your pardon for all that I have said against you: I have wronged you.

Belf. Jun. Good sir, reflect not on that! I am resolved ere I have done, to deserve your good word.

Sir Will. 'Twas ill fortune we have missed my most ungracious rebel, that monster of villainy.

Belf. Jun. Let me alone with him, sir; upon my honour I will deliver him safe this night. But, now let us see the execution.

Sir Will. Dear Ned, you bring tears into my eyes. Let me embrace thee, my only comfort now.

Belf. Jun. Good sir, let's on and see the justice of this



ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

Enter CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, and HACKUM.



CHEAT. Oh, unmerciful dogs! Were ever gentlemen used thus before? I am drenched into a quartan ague.

Sham. My limbs are stiff and numbed all over. But where I am beaten and bruised, there I have some sense left.

Hack. Dry blows I could have born magnanimously; but to be made such a sop of! Besides, I have had the worst of it, by wearing my own hair; to be shaved all on one side, and with a lather made of channel-dirt, instead of a wash-ball; I have lost half the best head of hair in the Friars; and a whisker worth fifty pounds, in its intrinsic value to a commander.

Cheat. Indeed your magnanimous phiz is somewhat disfigured by it, captain.

Sham. Your military countenance has lost much of its ornament.

Hack. I am as disconsolate as a bee that has lost his sting; the other moiety of whisker must follow. Then all the terror of my face is gone; that face that used to fright young prigs into submission. I shall now look but like an ordinary man.

Sham. What reparation will that be? I am a gentleman, and can never show my face among my kindred more.

Cheat. We that can show our faces after what we have done, may well show them after what we have suffered. Great souls are above ordinances, and never can be slaves to fame.

Hack. My honour is tender, and this one affront will cost me at least five murders.

Cheat. Let's not prate and shiver in cold fits here, but call your wife with the cherry-brandy, and let's ask after the Squire. If they have taken him, 'tis the worst part of the story.

Hack. No, I saw the Squire run into the Friars at first. But I'll go fetch some cherry-brandy, and that will comfort us. [*Steps in for brandy.*] Here's the bottle, let's drink by word of mouth. [*Drinks.*]

Cheat. Your cherry-brandy is most sovereign and edifying. [*CHEATLY drinks.*]

Sham. Most exceeding comfortable after our Temple pickling. [*Drinks.*]

Cheat. A fish has a damned life on't: I shall have that aversion to water, after this—that I shall scarce ever be cleanly enough to wash my face again.

Hack. Well! I'll to the barber's and get myself shaved; then go to the Squire and be new accoutred. [*Exit HACKUM.*]

Cheat. Dear Shamwell, we must not, for a little affliction, forget our main business; our caravan must be well managed. He is now drunk, and when he wakes, will be very fit to be married. Mrs. Termagant has given us a judgment of £2,000 upon that condition.

Sham. The sooner we dispose of him the better; for all his kindred are bent to retrieve him; and the Temple joining in the war against us will be too hard for us; so that we must make what we can of him immediately.

Cheat. If he should be once cool, or irresolute, we

sufficiently dipped him, as we shall by this marriage and her judgment, he is our own for ever.

Sham. But what shall we do for our Whitefriars' chaplain, our Alsatian divine? I was in search of him before our late misfortune, and the rogue is holed somewhere. I could not find him, and we are undone without him.

Cheat. 'Tis true; pray go instantly and find him out; he dares not stir out of his covert; beat it well all over for him; you'll find him tappes'd' in some ale-house, bawdy-house, or brandy-shop.

Sham. He's a brave swingeing orthodox, and will marry any couple at any time; he defies license and canonical hours, and all those foolish ceremonies.

Cheat. Prithee look after him while I go to prepare the lady.

Sham. You rogue, Cheatly, you have a loving design upon her; you will go to twelve with the Squire. If you do I will have my snack.

Cheat. Go, go, you are a wag. [*Exeunt severally.*]

[SCENE II. ?]

Enter RUTH, BELFOND JUNIOR, and TRUMAN at SCRAPEALL'S HOUSE.

Ruth. She told her tale so passionately that Isabella believes every word of it; and is resolved, as she says, never to see thee more.

Belf. Jun. Oh, this most malicious and most infamous of her sex! there is not the least truth in her accusation.

Tru. That to my knowledge: he is not a man of those principles.

Ruth. I will send them to you if I can; and in the meantime be upon the watch.

Tru. Take this writing with thee; which is a bond from us, to make good our agreement with thee.

Ruth. 'Tis well, and still I doubt not to perform my

Belf. Jun. Was ever man plagued with a wench like me? Well, say what they will, the life of a whore-master is a foolish, restless, anxious life; and there's an end on't. What can be done with this malicious devil? A man cannot offer violence to a woman.

Tru. Steal away her child, and then you may awe her.

Belf. Jun. I have emissaries abroad to find out the child; but she'll sacrifice that, and all the world, to her revenge.

Tru. You must arrest her upon a swingeing action, which she cannot get bail for, and keep her till she is humbled.

Enter TERESIA.

Madam, I kiss your hand.

Teres. You have done well, Mr. Belfond. Here has been a lady, whom you have a child by, were contracted to, and have deserted for an attorney's daughter which you keep. My cousin says she will never see you more.

Belf. Jun. If this be true, madam, I deserve never to see her more; which would be worse than death to me.

Teres. I have prevailed with her once more to see you and hear what you can say to this. Come, come, cousin. [*She leads in ISABELLA.*] Look you, cousin, Mr. Belfond denies all this matter.

Isab. I never doubted that. But certainly it is impossible to counterfeit so livelily as she did.

Belf. Jun. Heaven be my witness, that her accusation is false; I never was yet contracted to any woman, nor made the least promise, or gave any one the least hope of it; and if I do not demonstrate my innocence to you, I will be content for ever to be debarred the sight of you, more prized by me than liberty or life.

Isab. And yet perhaps these very words were said to her!

Tru. Madam, you have not time, if you value your own liberty, to argue any longer. We will carry you to Sir Edward Belfond's; his sister is his housekeeper, and

Teres. He is esteemed a worthy gentleman ; nor could we choose a better guardian.

Isab. At least, how could you use a woman ill you had a child by ?

Belf. Jun. Not all the malice of mankind can equal hers. I have been frail, I must confess, as others ; and though I have provided for her and her child, yet every day she does me all the outrageous mischief she can possibly conceive ; but this has touched me in the tenderest point.

Isab. 'Twould be much for my honour to put myself into the hands of a known wench.

Belf. Jun. Into the hands of one who has abandoned all the thoughts of vice and folly for you.

Tru. Besides, madam, you neither of you trust us ; your governess is with you, and yet we are ready to make good our words by the assistance of the parson.

Teres. That's another point. But I am sure, cousin, there is no dallying about our liberty : if you be in love with your gaol, stay ; I, for my part, am resolved to go.

Belf. Jun. My uncle's a virtuous honourable man ; my aunt, his sister, a lady of great piety. Think if you will not be safer there than with your uncle, by whom you are sold for £5,000 to my knowledge, to one who is the most debauched dissolute fellow this day in London.

Teres. Liberty, liberty, I say ; I'll trust myself and my governess.

Enter RUTH.

Ruth. Haste, and agree : your father has sent to have supper ready in less than half an hour.

Teres. Away, away ; I am ready. Cousin, farewell.

Belf. Jun. For Heaven's sake, madam, on my knees I beg you to make use of this occasion, or you have lost yourself ; and I too shall for ever lose you for marriage, which alone can keep me from being the most miserable. You may advise, and all things shall be cleared up to

Teres. Farewell, dear cousin ; let's kiss at parting.

Isab. Sure thou hast not the conscience ; thou wilt not leave me ?

Teres. By my troth but I will.

Isab. By my troth but you shall not ; for I'll go with thee.

Belf. Jun. May all the joys of life for ever wait on you !

Ruth. Haste ! haste ! begone. [*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE III. ?]

Enter SIR WILLIAM BELFOND.

Sir Will. That I should live to this unhappy age ! to see the fruit of all my hopes thus blasted. How long, like chemists, have I watched and toiled ? and in the minute when I expected to have seen protection, all is blown up in fumo.

Enter SIR EDWARD.

Brother ! I am ashamed to look on you, my disappointment is so great. Oh, this most wicked recreant ! this perverse and infamous son !

Sir Edw. Brother, a wise man is never disappointed. Man's life is like a game at tables ; if at any time the cast you most shall need does not come up, let that which comes instead of it be mended by your play.

Sir Will. How different have been our fates ! I left the pleasures of the town to marry, which was no small bondage ; had children, which brought more care upon me. For their sakes I lived a rustic, painful, hard, severe, and melancholy life : morose, inhospitable, sparing even necessaries ; tenacious, even to griping, for their good. My neighbours shunned me, my friends neglected me, my children hate me, and wish my death. Nay, this wicked son, in whom I have set up my rest, and principally for whose good I thus had lived, has now defeated all my hopes.

Sir Edw. 'Twas your own choice ; you would not learn

Sir Will. You have lived ever at ease, indulged all pleasures, and melted down your time in daily feasts and in continual revels: gentle, complaisant, affable, and liberal, and at great expense. The world speaks well of you; mankind embraces you; your son loves you, and wishes your life as much as he can do his own. But I'll perplex myself no more; I look upon this rascal as an excrement, a wen, or gangrened limb lopped off.

Sir Edw. Rather look on him as a dislocated one, and get him set again. By this time, you see, severity will do nothing. Entice him back to you by love; in short, give him liberty and a good allowance. There now remains no other way to reclaim him; for like a stone-horse broke in among the mares, no fence hereafter will contain him.

Sir Will. Brother, I look upon you as a true friend, that would not insult upon my folly and presumption, and confess you are nearer to the right than I. Your son, I hope, will be a comfort to me.

Sir Edw. I doubt it not; but consider, if you do not reconcile yourself and reclaim yours, as I tell you, you lop off the paternal estates, which is all entailed for ever upon your family: for, in the course he is, the reversion will be gone in your lifetime.

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR, TRUMAN, ISABELLA,
TERESIA, *and* RUTH.

Belf. Jun. Here are my father and my uncle. Mask yourselves, ladies; you must not yet discover who you are.

Sir Edw. Yonder's Ned, and his friend, with ladies masked. Who should they be?

Sir Will. Whores, whores! What should they be else? Here's a comfortable sight again! He is incorrigible.

Sir Edw. 'Tis you that are incorrigible. How ready

Belf. Jun. Sir, pardon the freedom I use with you. I humbly desire protection for these ladies in your house: they are women of honour, I do assure you, and desire to be concealed for some small time. An hour hence I will discover all to you, and you will then approve of what I do.

Sir Edw. Dear Ned, I will trust thy honour, and without any examination do as you would have me.

Sir Will. Why, brother! what a pox! Will you pimp for your son? What a devil! Will you make your house a bawdy-house?

Sir Edw. Why, will the must never be gotten out of your old vessel? Ladies, be pleased to honour my house; and be assured that while you are there 'tis yours.

[*He waits on the Ladies and RUTH.*

Belf. Jun. Sir, my friend and I are just now going to do you service. I'll pawn my life to you, sir; I will retrieve your rebel son, and immediately restore him to you, and bring him, as he ought to come, on's knees, with a full submission.

Sir Will. You will oblige me; thou gain'st upon me hourly, and I begin to love thee more and more.

Belf. Jun. There's nothing in the world I aim at now but your love; and I will be bold to say, I shortly will deserve it. But this business requires haste, for I have laid everything ready. 'Tis almost bedtime; come, friend.

[*Exit with TRUMAN.*

Sir Will. Well, I'll say that for him, he is a good-natured boy. It makes me weep to think how harsh I have been to him. I'll in to my brother, and expect the event.

[SCENE IV. ?]

*Enter BELFOND SENIOR, CHEATLY, SHAMWELL,
and HACKUM.*

Cheat. I value not misfortune so long as I have

Sham. My dear, dear cousin ! I will hug thee close to me ; I feared to have lost thee.

Belf. Sen. How happy am I in the truest, the dearest friends that ever man enjoyed ! Well, I was so afflicted for you, I was forced to make myself devilish boosy to comfort me.

Cheat. Your brother has heard of this great match you are towards. She has to my knowledge—for I do all her law business for her—fifteen hundred pounds a year jointure, and ten thousand pounds in plate, money, and jewels ; and this damned envious brother of yours will break it off, if you make not haste and prevent him.

Belf. Sen. My dear friends, you are in the right ; never man met with such before. I'll disappoint the rogue my brother, and the old prig my father ; adad, I'll do it instantly.

Cheat. Come, Squire, haste. Captain, do you follow us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes [V. ?] to Mrs. TERMAGANT'S *fine Lodgings.*

Enter BELFOND SENIOR, CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, HACKUM, Parson, Mrs. TERMAGANT *and her* Servants.

Cheat. Madam, the time admits of no longer deliberation ; if you take not this opportunity, my friend here will be ravished from us.

Belf. Sen. Ay, madam, if you take me not now, you will lose me, madam. You will consider what you do.

Term. Well, Mr. Cheatly, you dispose of me as you please. I have ever been guided by your wise advice.

Sham. Come, parson, do your office ; have you your book about ye ?

Pars. What ! do you think I am without the tools of my trade ?

Cheat. Can't you come presently to the joining of hands, and leave out the rest of the formalities ?

Pars. Ay, ay : come, stand forth.

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR, TRUMAN, Constable, Serjeant,
and Musqueteers.

Belf. Jun. Here they are : seize them all.

Cheat. Hell and damnation ! We are all undone.

Belf. Sen. Hands off ! let me alone ; I am going to be married. You envious rascal, to come just in the nick !

Belf. Jun. Brother, be satisfied there's nothing but honour meant to you ; 'tis for your service.

Term. Oh, this accursed wretch ! to come in this unlucky minute, and ruin my fortune !

Belf. Sen. She has fifteen hundred a year jointure, and ten thousand pound in money, &c., and I had been married to her in three minutes.

Belf. Jun. You have 'scaped the worst of ruins. Resist not ; if you do, you shall be carried by head and heels. Your father will receive you, and be kind, and give you as good an allowance as ever I had.

Sham. Where's your warrant ?

Const. 'Tis here, from my Lord Chief Justice.

Belf. Jun. Let me see your bride that was to be. Oh, Mrs. Termagant ! Oh, horror ! horror ! What a ruin have you 'scaped ! This was my mistress, and still maintained by me. I have a child by her three years old.

Term. Impudent villain ! How dare you lie so basely ?

Belf. Jun. By Heaven, 'tis true !

Term. I never saw him in my life before.

Belf. Jun. Yes, often to my plague. Brother, if I do not prove this to you, believe me not in aught I e'er shall say.

[TERMAGANT goes to stab at BELFOND JUNIOR.

TRUMAN lays hold on her.

Tru. Belfond, look to yourself.

Belf. Jun. He ! damn him !

I'll wait on you, and you will thank me for your deliverance.

Tru. I am assured you will; you are delivered from the most infamous and destructive villains that ever yet took sanctuary here.

Belf. Jun. And from two mischiefs you must have for ever sunk under, incest and beggary. Those three are only in the warrant with my brother; him I'll wait upon, bring you the rest. Hey! the cry is up; but we are provided.

[*A great noise in the streets, and the horn blowing;*
"An arrest! an arrest!"

Cheat. Undone! undone! all's lost!

Sham. Ruined! for ever lost!

Hack. I am surprised, and cannot fight my way through.

Belf. Sen. What, are all these rogues? and that a whore? and am I cheated?

Belf. Jun. Even so; come along. Make ready, musqueteers. Do you take care of my brother, and conduct him with the rest to my uncle's house; I must go before, and carry my little mistress, to make up the business with her father.

Tru. I'll do it, I warrant you.

Serjeant. We are ready.

[*Exeunt all but Mrs. TERMAGANT.*

Term. Oh, vile misfortune! had he but stayed six minutes, I had crowned all my revenge with one brave act, in marrying of his brother. Well, I have one piece of vengeance, which I will execute or perish; besides, I'll have his blood, and then I'll die contented. [*Exit.*

SCENE [VI. ?], *the Street.*

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR, CHEATLY, SHAMWELL,
HACKUM, TRUMAN, Constable, Serjeant, Guards.

Serj. Present.

[*The debtors run up and down, some without their breeches, others without their coats; some, out of balconies; some crying out, "Oars, oars, sculler!" "Five pounds for a boat!" "Ten pounds for a boat!" "Twenty pounds for a boat!" The inhabitants all come out armed as before; but as soon as they see the musqueteers they run, and every one shifts for himself.*

Tru. Hey, how they run! [Exeunt.]

[SCENE VII. ?]

Enter, in Sir EDWARD'S House, Sir EDWARD BELFOND and Attorney.

Sir Edw. This is the time I appointed my son to bring your daughter hither; the witness is a most malicious lying wench, and can never have credit. Besides, you know an action will sufficiently stop her mouth; for, were it true, she can never prove what she says.

Att. You say right, sir; next to her being innocent, is the concealing of her shame.

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR and LUCIA.

Lucia. And can I live to hear my fatal sentence of parting with you!—Hold, heart, a little.

Belf. Jun. It is with some convulsions I am torn from you; but I must marry, I cannot help it.

Lucia. And must I never see you more?

Belf. Jun. As a lover, never; but your friend I'll be while I have breath.

Lucia [*to herself*]. Heart, do not swell so. This has awakened me, and made me see my crime. Oh, that it had been sooner!

Belf. Jun. Sir, I beg a thousand pardons, that I should attempt to injure your family, for it has gone no farther yet. For any fact, she's innocent; but 'twas no

Sir Edw. Come, pretty lady, let me present you to your father. Though, as my son says, she's innocent; yet, because his love had gone so far, I present her with fifteen hundred pounds; my son and you shall be trustees for her; to-morrow you shall have the money.

Belf. Jun. You are the best of all mankind.

Att. All the world speaks your praises justly.

• *Lucia.* A thousand thanks, sir, for your bounty; and if my father please to pardon me this slip, in which I was so far from fact that I had scarce intention, I will hereafter outlive the strictest nun.

Att. Rise; I do pardon you.

Sir Edw. That's well; and if they be not kind to you, appeal to me. It will be fit for you to go from hence with the least notice that can be; to-morrow I'll bring the money. Who are the ladies you have entrusted me with, Ned? [*Exeunt Attorney and LUCIA.*]

Belf. Jun. Scrapeall's niece and daughter! The niece my father was to give five thousand pounds for, for his son. If you will give me leave, I shall marry her for nothing; and the other will take my friend.

Sir Edw. How, Ned! She's a Puritan.

Belf. Jun. No more than you, sir; she was bred otherwise, but was fain to comply for peace. She is beautiful, and witty to a miracle! and I beg your consent, for I will die before I marry without it.

Sir Edw. Dear Ned, thou hast it; but what hast thou done with the Alsations?

Belf. Jun. I have the rogues in custody, and my brother too; whom I rescued in the very minute he was going to be married to a whore, to my whore, who plagues me continually. I see my father coming; pray prepare him, while I prepare my brother for a meeting with him; he shall not see me. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir WILLIAM BELFOND.

Sir Edw. Oh, yes ; he has your son and the three rogues in custody, and will bring them hither. Brother, pray resolve not to lose a son ; but use him kindly, and forgive him.

Sir Will. I will, brother ; and let him spend what he will, I'll come up to London, feast and revel, and never take a minute's care while I breathe again.

Enter a Servant to Sir EDWARD.

Servant. Sir, a young gentleman would speak with you.

Sir Edw. Bid him come in.

Enter Mrs. TERMAGANT in Man's Clothes.

Term. If you be Sir Edward Belfond, I come to tell you what concerns your honour and my love.

Sir Edw. I am he.

Term. Know then, sir, I am informed your brother, Sir William Belfond's son, is to marry Isabella, the niece of Mr. Scrapeall.

Sir Edw. What then, sir ?

Term. Then he invades my right ; I have been many months contracted to her, and as you are a man of honour I must tell you we have sealed that contract with mutual enjoyments.

Sir Will. How ! What, was my son to marry a whore ? I'll to this damned fellow instantly, and make him give up my articles.

Sir Edw. Have patience ; be not too rash.

Sir Will. Patience ! What, to have my son marry a whore !

Sir Edw. Look you, brother, you must stay a moment.

Enter BELFOND JUNIOR.

Sir Will. Oh, Ned, your brother has 'scaped a fine match : this same Isabella is contracted to, and has been enjoyed by, this gentleman, as he calls it. He

Belf. Jun. Yes, he that had ; but I will cut the throat of him that affirms that of Isabella.

Term. Sir, I demand the protection of your house.

Sir Edw. Hold, son.

Term. What devil sent him hither at this time? [*Aside.*

Belf. Jun. I'll bring them to confront this rogue——
What a devil's this? Have we another brother of that devil Termagant's here? [*Exit.*

Sir Edw. This is a very odd story.

Sir Will. Let me go, brother ; 'tis true enough. But what makes Ned concerned ?

Sir Edw. Let us examine yet farther.

*Enter BELFOND JUNIOR, with ISABEL, TERESIA, RUTH,
and TRUMAN.*

Sir Will. Look, here they are all : how the devil comes this about ?

Term. Oh, madam, are you here ! I claim your contract, which, I suppose, will not offend you.

Isabel. What means this impudent fellow ? I ne'er saw his face before.

Term. Yes, madam, you have seen, and more than seen me often, since we were contracted.

Isabel. What instrument of villainy is this ?

Term. Nay, if you deny : friends, come in.

Enter two Alsatian Affidavit Men.

Friends, do you know this gentlewoman ?

1st Witness. Yes, she is Mr. Scrapeall's niece.

2nd Witness. We were both witnesses to a contract of marriage between you two.

Isabel. Oh, impious wretches ! What conspiracy is this !

Sir Will. Can anything be more plain ? They seem civil, grave, substantial men.

Belf. Jun. Hold, hold ; have I found ye ? 'Tis she ;

Sir Will. A woman !

Sir Edw. Secure those witnesses.

Belf. Jun. A woman ! No ; she has out-sinned her sex, and is a devil. Oh, devil, most complete devil ! This is the lady I have been so much of late obliged to.

Isabel. This is she that told us the fine story to-day.

Teres. I know her face again ; most infamous, lying, creature !

Term. I am become desperate : have at thee.

[*She snaps a pistol at BELFOND, which only flashes in the pan ; the Ladies shriek.*

Belf. Jun. Thank you, madam : Are you not a devil ? 'Twas loaden ; 'twas well meant, truly.

[*Takes the pistol from her.*

Sir Edw. Lay hold on her : I'll send her to a place where she shall be tamed. I never heard of such a malice.

Sir Will. Dear Ned, thou hast so obliged me ; thou meltest my heart. That thou should'st steal away those ladies, and save me five thousand pounds ! Now I hope, madam, my son Tim shall be your husband without bargain and sale.

Isabel. No ; I can assure you, sir, I would never have performed that bargain of my uncle's : we had determined to dispose of ourselves before that ; and now are more resolved.

Teres. We have broken prison, by the help of these gentlemen, and I think we must e'en take the authors of our liberty.

Isabel. Will not that be a little hard, cousin, to take their liberty from them who have given it to us ?

Sir Will. Well, I am disappointed, but cannot blame thee, Ned.

[*TRUMAN goes to TERESIA.*

Enter BELFOND SENIOR.

Upon my knees I beg your pardon, and never will offend you more, adad, I will not : I thought they had been the honestest, the finest gentlemen in England ; and it seems they are rogues, cheats and blockheads.

Sir Will. Rise, Tim. I profess thou makest me weep ; thou hast subdued me ; I forgive thee. I see all human care is vain ; I will allow thee five hundred pounds a year, and come and live with ease and pleasure : I'll feast and revel, and wear myself with pain and care no more.

Belf. Sen. A thousand thanks : I'll never displease you while I live again ; adad I won't.—Here's an alteration ! I never had a good word from him before.

Sir Will. I would have married you to that pretty lady ; but your brother was too hard for you.

Belf. Sen. She's very pretty : but 'tis no matter. I am in no such haste, but I can stay and see the world first.

Sir Edw. Welcome, dear nephew, to my house and me. And now, my dear son, be free, and before all this company let me know all the incumbrances you have upon you.

Belf. Jun. That good-natured lady is the only one that's heavy upon me ; I have her child in my possession, which she says is mine.

Term. Has he my child ? then I am undone for ever ! oh, cursed misfortune !

Sir Edw. Look you, madam, I will settle an annuity of a hundred pound a year upon you, so long as you shall not disturb my son. And for your child, I'll breed her up and provide for her like a gentlewoman : but if you are not quiet, you shall never see her more.

Term. You speak like a noble gentleman : I'll strive to compose myself. I am at last subdued, but will not stay to see the triumphs. [*Exit hastily.*]

Sir Edw. Well, dear Ned, dost owe any money ?

Belf. Jun. No, my dear father, no : you have been too

Sir Edw. Now, madam, if you please to accept him for a husband, I will settle fifteen hundred a year on him in present, which shall be your jointure. Besides that, your own money shall be laid out in land, and settled on you too. And at my death, the rest of my estate.

Isabel. You do me too much honour ; you much outbid my value.

Belf. Jun. You best of fathers, and of all mankind, I throw myself thus at your feet ; let me embrace your knees, and kiss those hands.

Sir Edw. Come, rise, and kiss these hands.

Belf. Jun. A long farewell to all the vanity and lewdness of youth : I offer myself at your feet as a sacrifice without a blemish now.

Isabel. Rise, I beseech you, rise.

Teres. Your offers, sir, are better much than I could expect, or can deserve.

Tru. That's impossible ! The wealth of both the Indies could not buy you from me, I am sure.

Ruth. Come, come, I have been governess ; I know their minds. Come, give your hands where you have given your hearts. Here, friend Truman : first take this.

Teres. My governess will have it so.

Sir Edw. Joy, sir, be ever with you : please to make my house your own.

Isabel. How can I be secure you will not fall to your old courses again ?

Belf. Jun. I have been so sincere in my confessions, you may trust me ; but I call Heaven to witness, I will hereafter be entirely yours. I look on marriage as the most solemn vow a man can make ; and 'tis, by consequence, the basest perjury to break it.

Ruth. Come, come, I know your mind too ; take him, take him.

Isabel. If fate will have it so

Isabel. You are very devout of late.

Sir Edw. A thousand blessings on you both!

Sir Will. Perpetual happiness attend you both!

Belf. Sen. Brother and madam! I wish you joy from my heart, adad I do; though between you and I, brother, I intend to have my swing at whoring, and drinking, as you had, before I come to it though.

Sir Edw. Here, bring in these rogues.

*The Constable brings in CHEATLY, SHAMWELL, and
HACKUM.*

Come, rascals, I shall take care to see examples made of you.

Cheat. We have substantial bail.

Sir Edw. I'll see it shall be substantial bail: it is my Lord Chief Justice's warrant, returnable to none but him: but I will prosecute you, I assure you.

Cheat. Squire, dear Squire!

Hack. Good, noble Squire, speak for us.

Sham. Dear cousin!

Belf. Sen. Oh, rogues! Cousin! you have cozened me; you made a put, a caravan, a bubble of me: I gave a judgment for sixteen hundred pound and had but two hundred and fifty; but there's some goods they talk of; but if e'er I am caught again I'll be hanged.

Sir Will. Unconscionable villains! The Chancery shall relieve us.

Sir Edw. I'll rout this knot of most pernicious knaves, for all the privilege of your place. Was ever such impudence suffered in a government? Ireland's conquered; Wales subdued; Scotland united: but there are some few spots of ground in London, just in the face of the Government, unconquered yet, that hold in rebellion still. Methinks 'tis strange that places so near the King's Palace should be no parts of his dominions. 'Tis a shame to the societies of the law

shut against the King's writ, or *Posse Comitatus*? Take them away, and those two witnesses.

[*The Constable and Watch hale them away.*

Belf. Sen. Away with 'em! Rogues! Rascals! damned prigs!

Sir Edw. Come, ladies, I have sent for some neighbours to rejoice with us. We have fiddles: let's dance a brisk round or two, and then we'll make a collation.

[*In the flourish before the dance, enter SCRAPEALL.*

Scrap. Oh, Sir William! I am undone! ruined! the birds are flown. Read the note they left behind 'em.

Sir Will. Peace; they are dancing; they have disposed of themselves.

Scrap. Oh, seed of serpents! Am I cheated then? I'll try a trick of law, you frogs of the bottomless pit, I will, and instantly. What, dancing too? then they are fallen indeed!

[*They dance. Exit SCRAPEALL hastily.*

Sir Edw. Come, brother; now, who has been in the right, you or I?

Sir Will. You have: prithee do not triumph.

Belf. Jun. Farewell for ever all the vice of the age:

There is no peace but in a virtuous life,
Nor lasting joy, but in a tender wife.

Sir Edw. You, that would breed your children well, by kindness and liberality endear 'em to you: and teach 'em by example.

Severity spoils ten, for one it mends:
If you'd not have your sons desire your ends,
By gentleness and bounty make those sons your friends.

[*Exeunt omnes.*





SPOKEN BY MRS. MOUNTFORD.



YE mighty scourers of these narrow seas,
Who suffer not a bark to fail in peace,
But with your fire of culverins ye roar,
Bring 'em by th' lee, and rummage
all their store ;
Our poet ducked, and looked as if
half dead ;

At every shot that whistled o'er his head.
Frequent engagements ne'er could make him bold
He sneaked into a corner of the hold.
Since he submits, pray ease him of his fear,
And with a joint applause bid him appear ;
Good critics don't insult and domineer,
He fears not sparks, who with brisk dress and mien
Come not to hear or see, but to be seen,
Each prunes himself, and with a languishing eye,
Designs to kill a lady by the by.
Let each fantastic ugly beau and shape,
Little of man, and very much of ape,
Admire himself, and let the poet 'scape.

Ladies, your anger most he apprehends,
And is grown past the age of making friends
Of any of the sex whom he offends.
No princess frowns, no hero rants and whines,

No battles, trumpets, drums ; nor any die ;
No mortal wound to please your cruelty ;
Who like not anything but tragedy.
With fond, unnatural extravagances,
Stolen from the silly authors of romances.
Let such the chamber-maids' diversion be ;
Pray be you reconciled to comedy.
For when we make you merry, you must own
You are much prettier than when you frown.
With charming smiles you use to conquer still ;
The melancholy look's not apt to kill.
Our poet begs you who adorn this sphere,
This shining circle, will not be severe.
Here no chit-chat, here no tea-tables are.
The cant he hopes will not be long unknown,
'Tis almost grown the language of the town.
For fops, who feel a wretched want of wit,
Still set up something that may pass for it.
He begs that you will often grace his Play,
And lets you know Monday's his visiting day.





BURY FAIR.







THIS is by far the best and liveliest of all Shadwell's plays, and it so happens that it is also less disfigured with coarseness of expression than any of them. Even Gertrude is the least unattractive of all the poet's womankind, though they are ever something of "clogdogdos" (as his master, Ben, and Mr. Oldwit in this piece would

have it) to the action. Lord Bellamy is a very little of a milksop; but his friend Wildish is nearly, if not quite, the least offensive of the whole gang of Restoration comedy heroes. The Barber Count plays his part with so much adroitness that one wishes him a better end. Sir Humphry is a really clever example of the country wit, and the mixture of folly and coxcombry with honour and spirit in Trim, is quite above Shadwell's usual conception of character. The Fair scenes, the wit-combats, and so forth, are also singularly fresh. The political touches are not in the best taste, but considering the ferocious manner in which the other side, from Dryden downwards, had abused their opportunities in the same kind, it is hard to quarrel with them. The Epilogue too is not unhappy, and the *curée*—the hunt for place and preferment—that follows revolutions is well described. The play was brought on the stage in 1689.





To

CHARLES,

Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household, Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, and one of the most Honourable Privy Council.

MY LORD,



WHO have been so long and so continually obliged by your Lordship, have ever fresh occasions of acknowledging your favour and bounty to me, and cannot be silent of the late great honour you have done me in making me the King's servant ;¹ but must publish my gratitude for that and all the rest of the great obligations I have received. Your Lordship not only makes use of your own power, but of that which the King has entrusted you with, to do good to mankind, which you ever delighted in. And as I am apt to believe that no man had ever a great office conferred upon him with more favour from his Prince, so I am well assured no man ever received one with a more general liking of the people than your Lordship. Nothing but the service of so great and gracious a King, who so miraculously redeemed us, and since makes all our interests his own, could recompense you for the happy retirement you might enjoy, and wherein you so much delight.

This Play, my Lord, I humbly submit to your Lordship's judgment. I can write nothing worthy of your acceptance ; but I hope your Lordship will give some indulgence to this, since it was written during eight months' painful sickness, wherein all the several days in which I was able to write any part of a scene amounted not to one month, except some few which were employed

¹ This was the appointment as Poet Laureate, which Dryden lost as a non-juror, and for which the Lord Chamberlain Dorset, friend of both, recommended Shadwell with the King's consent.

in indispensable business. This is indeed no excuse in any one who does not write for necessities of life.

The Play has met with a kind reception from all for aught I hear, but some of the late loyal poets, above whose censure I esteem myself; and from some who are still so fond of the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance that they think it a profanation to bring the very words into a comedy.

These are so weak to mistake that for a point of divinity which is indeed a point of law; and some of the most vigorous maintainers of that doctrine have seen their error and not only left off professing it, but have wisely and justly contradicted it in their practice by assisting towards our late wonderful deliverance. And sure there is no need of any great measure of understanding to find out that when the compact on which government is founded is broken, and those very laws destroyed which were made to secure the people in their estates, liberty and religion, the law of nature must take place which not only permits but obliges mankind to self-defence.

I never could recant in the worst of times, when my ruin was designed and my life was sought, and for near ten years I was kept from the exercise of that profession which had afforded me a competent subsistence; and surely I shall not now do it, when there is a liberty of speaking common sense, which, though not long since forbidden, is now grown current.

I humbly beg your Lordship's pardon for the trouble of this epistle, who am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obliged humble servant,

THO. SHADWELL.





PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. MOUNTFORT.

To what hard laws you comic writers bind !
Who must at every turn new humour find ;
Though the great masters of the former age
Had all the choice of humour for the stage :
And they that plenteous harvest reaped so clean,
Their successors can little else but glean.
Frolic and Cockwood yet were good and new ;
And the Plain-dealer, and Sir Fopling you
Have seen, and justly have applauded too.
Our author some new humour did produce,
But look not for an unexhausted cruse.
The task each day grows harder than before ;
For as good poets have brought forth great store,
So fellows of no genius, with much toil,
Still sweat for humour, which they always spoil :
And by their hints good comic pens prevent,
As whelps stanch hounds, by foiling of the scent,
These wretched poëtitos, who got praise
For writing most confounded loyal plays,
With viler, coarser jests than at Bear-Garden,
And silly Grubstreet songs worse than Tom-Farthing.
If any noble patriot did excel,
His own and country's rights defending well,
These yelping curs were straight loo'd on to bark,
On the deserving man to set a mark.
These abject, fawning parasites and knaves,
Since they were such, would have all others slaves.
'Twas precious loyalty that was thought fit

No wonder common-sense was all cried down,
And noise and nonsense swaggered through the town.
Our author then oppressed, would have you know it,
Was silenced for a Nonconformist poet ;
In those hard times he bore the utmost test,
And now he swears he's loyal as the best.
Now, sirs, since common-sense has won the day,
Be kind to this, as to his last year's Play.
His friends stood firmly to him when distressed ;
He hopes the number is not now decreased.
He found esteem from those he valued most :
Proud of his friends, he of his foes could boast,
To all you Bury sparks he bid me say,
That every part is fiction in his Play ;
Particular reflections there are none :
Our poet knows not one in all your town.
If any has so very little wit
To think a fop's dress can his person fit,
E'en let him take it, and make much of it.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Lord BELLAMY.	<i>Mr. Betterton.</i>
Mr. WILDISH.	<i>Mr. Mounfort.</i>
Mr. OLDWIT.	<i>Mr. Underhill.</i>
Sir HUMPHRY NODDY.	<i>Mr. Noakes.</i>
Mr. TRIM.	<i>Mr. Bowman.</i>
LA ROCH, a French barber and peruke-maker.	} <i>Mr. Leigh.</i>
Valet to Mr. WILDISH.	
CHARLES, Page to my Lord BELLAMY.	<i>Mr. Bohen.</i>
Butler.	<i>Mr. Butler.</i>
NICHOLAS, servant to LA ROCH.	
Page to LA ROCH.	
Lady FANTAST, wife to Mr. OLDWIT.	<i>Mrs. Cory.</i>
Mrs. FANTAST, daughter to my Lady FANTAST by a former husband.	} <i>Mrs. Boutell.</i>
Mrs. GERTRUDE, OLDWIT'S daughter by a former wife.	
PHILADELPHIA, her sister, disguised as the Page CHARLES.	} <i>Mrs. Mountfort.</i>
LUCE, Mrs. FANTAST'S woman.	
Four ladies.	
Milliner, Perfumer, Hosier, Goldsmith, Indian-Gown Man, two Jack-Puddings, Gingerbread Woman, Fruit Women, Country Fellows and Wenches, Constable and his Guard, Servants and Footmen.	

SCENE—ST. EDMUND'S BURY.





BURY FAIR.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—WILDISH'S *Lodging.*

WILDISH *and his Valet dressing him.*



Valet. Now, I hope, sir, you will acknowledge you see a sweet town, clean and finely situated in a delicate air; here I was born, here I sucked my first breath.

Wild. Thus every coxcomb is big with the praise of the country and place of his nativity.

Val. All the world says as much of St. Edmund's Bury.

Wild. There is indeed some truth in this; but 'tis not thou, but the town, is in the right: for thou wouldst have recommended the air of the worst town in the hundreds¹ of Essex, hadst thou sucked thy first breath in it, as thou sayest. But one thing I can tell thee of thy town, that it can produce a blockhead.

Val. You may say what you please of me, sir; but there are so many fine gentlemen and ladies, so gallant and so well bred, we call it little London; and it outdoes St. James's Square, and all the squares, in dressing

¹ The part of Essex specially called "The Hundreds" is the low land near the coast, once infamous for malaria and not quite well

and breeding; nay, even the Court itself under the rose.

Wild. I doubt not but they are given to outdo, as all imitators are.

Val. Well, you London wits will never give any man, nor anything, a good word.

Wild. You impudent rascal! Wit, say you! What, do you call me names? I had as lief be called a pick-pocket as a wit. A wit is always a merry, idle, waggish fellow, of no understanding: parts indeed he has, but he had better be without 'em. Your solid fop is a better man; he'll be diligent and fawning, always in the way, and with his blockhead do his business at last. But your wit will either neglect all opportunities for pleasure, or if he brings his business into a hopeful way he will laugh at or draw his wit upon some great man or other, and spoil all.

Val. Would I were a wit, for all that. But to give you an example of the wit and breeding of our town, there is the Lady Fantast and her daughter.

Wild. The most perpetual, impertinent, prattling, conceited, affected jades that ever plagued mankind.

Val. Mercy on me! Impertinent! Why, they're the flower of Bury. Is not the young lady a beauty too?

Wild. I must confess God has given her one good face, but by her most insupportable affectation she screws it into twenty bad ones. She has naturally a good complexion, becoming good features; and she, by art, makes her face look like a new white wall with a red lattice.

Val. I hope you'll grant Mr. Oldwit is a fine, facetious, witty old gentleman, my Lady Fantast's husband?

Wild. Almost as arrant an ass as thou art. He is a paltry, old-fashioned wit and punner of the last age, that pretends to have been one of Ben Jonson's sons, and to have seen plays at the Blackfriars.

Val. You'll be stoned in the streets, sir, if you talk

Wild. A blunt, noisy, laughing, roaring, drinking fellow, as troublesome as a monkey, and as witless as a jackdaw ; he is, at best, but a wag.

Val. Well, sir, say what you please, he is a fine gentleman, and will make a man burst a vein to keep him company ; he has wit at will, that's certain.

• *Wild.* If the rogue had no more money at will he'd die in a ditch.

Val. Will nobody at Bury please you ? What think you of Mr. Trim ? • He's accounted the finest gentleman in all Bury for breeding and civility and the like.

Wild. Now you have hit on't : he is a most complete and finished fop. Nature has not been negligent, nor art been idle, in his composition. He is very wise, reserved, full of forms, and empty of substance ; all ceremony and no sense ; more troublesomely ill-bred with his formality than a high-shoed peasant with his roughness. Sir Noddy and he are two excellent fops in consort.

Val. Fops ! Mercy upon me ! You will be accounted a madman if you talk thus at Bury.

Wild. Yes, among fools.

Val. Why, they are those that carry all the town before 'em.

Wild. No doubt on't ; I never knew a town yet wherein the fops do not carry all before 'em. They are a numerous, impudent, and noisy party, while the wise and ingenious are few, modest, and reserved. There are men of wit, honour, and breeding ; and women of great wit, beauty, and ingenuity, and well-bred too, in this town, which is really a sweet town ; but these pretend to nothing. Your pretenders never have anything in 'em.

Enter Mr. TRIM.

Val. Hold, sir ! here is Mr. Trim.

Trim. O, sir, Mr. Wild's a fine fellow, but he's a

stars that brought you hither to render this town and your friends in it happy by your preference.

[TRIM stands jetting out his bum, and bowing all the while.

Wild. You do me honour, sir.

Trim. Coming abroad to participate of the freshness of the morning among our Bury gallants, the thrice-fortunate rencounter with one of your train put me in mind of paying that tribute of my service which I long have wished to pay. But my wishes have often been frustrated for want of that happy opportunity of kissing your hands, which I now enjoy.

Wild. Your great civilities are surprising; really your generosity is as much beyond my expectation as it is above my merit. (What an engine is this fop!) [*Aside.*

Trim. It is impossible that we of Bury, who, I may say with modesty enough, have no small fame for breeding and civility, can ever be so obnoxious to that stupidity, or neglect of either, as not to value the great honour done to us, and the cohonestation of us, by your arrival at Bury at this time of the Fair, which will add to the wonted gaiety and splendour of the place and season.

Wild. You astonish me with your most admirable address and complaisance; and I think there lives not, among the race of mankind, a person more skilful in all decencies of behaviour, completeness of expression, gestures of body, modulations of voice, and all those arts of modish gallantry which might render a man the mirror of Courts, and the wonder and example of all other places. [*Aside.*] A pox on this fool in a frame!

Val. Rarely done on both sides! Oh, how their tongues are hung!

Wild. Be pleased to sit.

Trim. Oh lord, sir! while you are on your feet! Sure I can never live to be blotted with that odious solecism

Wild. Sir, you will catch cold.

[*WILDISH* makes signs to put his hat on, and takes his own up. *TRIM* strives again who shall put on his hat last.

Trim. I had rather catch anything than the infamy of ill-breeding.

Wild. Well, sir, how stand affairs at Bury?

Trim. Singularly well, sir; the amenity of our situation, together with the equal temperature of the climate, produces in us that serenity of mind, that Bury seems to be the habitation of the Graces and the Muses.

Wild. Bury indeed seems to be the scene of beauty, wit and breeding.

Trim. 'Tis a great honour to us, to hear this pronounced by a person who is no less eminent in wit than celebrated for humanity and decency of deportment.

Wild. A pox on this puppy! Two more such would drive me out of Bury before I see my mistress, the creature of the world I am most passionately in love with! [Aside.

Trim. You, that make so noble a figure among the nimble and quick spirits of the age, and are such a top wit that all England rings out your fame!

Wild. Prithee, Mr. Trim, whate'er you do, don't call me a wit; 'tis good for nothing in this age but to undo a man; I shall be hunted for a wild beast. But pray, what lady rides Admiral here at Bury?

Trim. O Lord! who should but Madam Fantast, the sweet Lady Fantast's daughter? a paragon of beauty and a mirror of wit and breeding! At once the envy and wonder of the sex and age! She bears the flag of wit and breeding on the main topsail of her beauty. (A pretty trope!) [Aside.

Wild. How does Mr. Oldwit's young daughter? I saw her in London last Easter-term. She is the prettiest,

she blossoms under the sunshine of my Lady Fantast's favour and her daughter's example, she will flourish; otherwise not.

Wild. Very concise and dogmatical. [*Aside.*] You are a great servant of Mrs. Fantast's. [*To him.*]

Trim. I! I am her humble admirer, her adorer. I call her Dorinda, and she honours me with the name of Eugenius. I visit her daily.

Wild. Nicknames and visits! then there's somewhat more between you, i'faith, Mr. Trim.

Trim. Upon my honour, nothing but a certain creeping correspondence; a conversation that savours somewhat of gallantry, mixed now and then with ombre, crimp, comet, or incertain; and sometimes we read an author or so.

Wild. Or so? Hark in your ear.

Trim. Sir, I am astonished to think I should be obnoxious to that infelicity to be so mistaken: and I must tell you, sir, I scorn your words.

Wild. I did not think it had been a dishonour to a man to lie with a pretty woman.

Trim. I would not for the whole world: nor ever did—mistake me not—unless I were married.

Wild. What a devil do we all run after 'em and keep 'em company for, and dance, and play the fool, but *in ordine ad*?

Trim. I visit all the ladies for their conversation, for the excellence of their conversation.

Wild. Conversation! That is so frivolous it were not to be borne, but for something else that shall be nameless. And I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Trim; that any woman you keep company with who does not think you have a mind to lie with her, will never forgive you, to my knowledge.

Trim. Their conversation does infinitely transcend men's, I assure you: I have studied the sex.

never be alone with a woman but you must offer, or she knows you care not for her. Five to one but she grants; but if she does not care for you, but denies, she's certain by that you care for her, and will esteem you the better ever after.

Trim. Oh uncharitable sentence!

Wild. Come, you and I'll sup together and be merry; and two or three bottles will make you freer and more open-hearted.

Trim. I never sup. We of the better rank never sup at Bury.

Wild. How? not sup!

Trim. No.

*Enter Mr. OLDWIT, and Sir HUMPHRY NODDY
stealing in.*

Wild. Nor drink a bottle!

Trim. Never between meals. We do indeed divert ourselves with some milk-pottage in the evening; that's all.

Sir Hum. Now, now this rogue's my rival: I shall teaze him ere I have done with him.

[He plucks the chair from under TRIM and gives him a devilish fall: OLDWIT and he laugh immoderately.]

Oldw. Sir Humphry, forbear; I pray forbear: you'll be the death of me.

Wild. How now? what, will not this fool cut the other fool over the pate? Shall I have no sport with 'em?

Oldw. I shall break a vein if I keep you company, you arch wag, you! Mr. Wildish, I am come to kiss your hands: you are welcome to Bury Fair.

Wild. Sir, I am your most humble servant: you honour me with this visit.

Sir Hum. Dear Ned, let me kiss thee! Ah, Ned, that night I saw thee at Newmarket!

Wild. Which was the first night I ever saw the puppy.

Sir Hum. I shall never forget it. Ah, 'twas the merriest night!

Wild. Ay, 'twas so: we talked of nothing but cocks, dogs, and horses.

Sir Hum. Not a word. 'Twas the bravest night! But I was too hard for, and out-vapoured all the jockeys and cockers; and after that I hunted over a bottle, Here Jowler! hey Venus! and we roared so 'till four in the morning, that, Gad take me, between you and me, I was deaf on both ears for three weeks after; I have scarce recovered one ear yet. I would give fifty pound for such another night.

Trim. Sir, I must tell you your deportment is very indecent, and savours much of ill-breeding. And I would desire you would please to explain yourself in this particular.

Sir Hum. Pooh! Waggery, mere waggery. Dear Jack, kiss me: honest Jack, I love to be familiar with my friends. Jack, Jack, dear Jack! nowns Jack!

Trim. Jack, Jack, Jack! Familiar! I must tell you sir, I cannot brook the roughness of your demeanour: the consequences whereof may produce those effects as may not be agreeable to those decencies required in conversation. But I shall at present take my leave and visit ladies. Sir, I kiss your hands.

Wild. Sir, your most humble servant.

Trim. Mr. Oldwit, I am your most faithful servant.

[*Exit TRIM.*

Oldw. Your servant, sweet Mr. Trim. Well, Sir Humphry Noddy, go thy ways; thou art the archest wit and wag! I must forswear thy company; thou'lt kill me else.

Sir Hump. Hang't! a pox on't! what is this world worth, without wit, and waggery, and mirth? I love to be merry.

Sir Hum. You saw, Mr. Wildish, how I run down fellows at Newmarket with my jests and my tricks. They took me for a put; but I out-roared 'em all, i'faith; and could have put 'em all in a mouse-hole.

Wild. How does my lord, your dear friend and patron?

Sir Hum. Oh, sir, his lordship is in good health. He is nobody without me, poor man: he loves wit, and good company. I'll tell you, I'll tell you——

Oldw. Now we shall hear some wit and waggery!

Sir Hum. T'other day we were a hunting, and at a cold scent; one of his gentlemen being alighted, stood by a splash of water; I sneaked behind and pushed him, I vow to Gad, up the knees.

Oldw. Good, good! ha, ha, ha!

[*OLDWIT is big with laughter, then roars out.*

Sir Hum. Ha, ha, ha! But if you had seen his lordship laugh! the water trickled down his honour's cheeks. Then one Jeremy stood staring; I called him loudly and suddenly, and held my fingers thus: he turned suddenly, and hit his nose such a bump, that all the blood gushed out. Ha, ha, ha!

Oldw. Look you there! Ha, ha, ha! Well, well.

Sir Hum. But if you had seen his honour chuckle and laugh, till he was black in the face! I twirled another fellow's hat over a little river, that was not navigable; and he was forced to go a mile about to fetch it: I thought my lord would have killed himself! He desired me at last to forbear; he was not able to endure it.

Wild. My lord is a very merry man.

Sir Hum. Ay, Gad take me, as any's upon the face of the earth. But how goes wit at London?

Oldw. You are the chief genius, the high wit of the age.

Wild. Pr'hee, Mr. Oldwit, lay not that to my charge;

and we look upon you here to be the choicest wit of the times.

Sir Hum. And, i'faith, we can show you wit at Bury too.

Wild. What a devil, you won't make a wit of me, in spite of my teeth, will you?

Oldw. No, Nature has made you a wit. Why do you take it ill? I think it the greatest honour can be done to a man. I myself, simple as I stand here, was a wit in the last age: I was created Ben Jonson's son, in the Apollo. I knew Fletcher, my friend Fletcher, and his maid Joan. Well, I shall never forget him; I have supped with him at his house on the Bankside: he loved a fat loin of pork of all things in the world. And Joan his maid had her beer-glass of sack; and we all kissed her, i'faith, and were as merry as passed.

Wild. This was enough to make any man a wit.

Oldw. Pooh! this was nothing. I was a critic at Blackfriars; but at Cambridge, none so great as I with Jack Cleveland. But Tom Randol[ph] and I were hand and glove: Tom was a brave fellow; the most natural poet!

Sir Hum. They were brave fellows; but you wits nowadays out-top them all.

Wild. Zounds! I will have nothing to do with wit, I tell you.

Oldw. Pshaw, pshaw! but as I was telling you, you have seen many pretty things, that were written in those times, that were mine. For example: one Mr. Murial, a fellow of Pembroke Hall, had a horse died; I writ this upon it.

Now cruel Mors
Has ta'en the horse
Of Mr. Murial:
Ye scholars all

Ha! hum! hum! Nay, I was good at epitaphs, both of man and beast.

Sir Hum. Ha, ha, ha! admirable good, i'faith, Mr. Oldwit!

Wild. Why, this was wit all over! You were an arrant wit!

Oldw. And that translation too was mine.

Mittitur in disco mihi Piscis ab Archiepisco-
Po, non ponatur, quia potus non mihi datur.

I sent a fish
In a great dish,
To the Archbish—
Hop was not there,
Because he gave me no beer.

[*Sir HUMPHRY sneaks behind and pins him and
WILDISH together.*

Was not that lucky? Ha? hum! anon!

Wild. Most incomparable!

Oldw. I was such a rakehell, I would needs be a wit. My friends soon perceived I could not be a divine; so they sent me to the Inns of Court; and there, i'faith, I peppered the Court with libels and lampoons: my wit was so bitter I 'scaped the pillory very narrowly, between you and I. But then, for good language and strong lines, none outdid me.

Wild. Why, thou wert a most plaguy wit indeed!

Oldw. Ay, faith: and the poets were so in awe of me! You must know I was a devilish biting fellow. Why, we had a couple of your poets here; Sir Humphry and I made nothing of 'em, i'faith.

Sir Hum. Gad take me, they were but silly fellows; and yet, they say, they were cock poets.

Wild. That may very well be: we have poets, as pretty fops as any about town; and are fitter for subjects of comedies than authors of anything.

Enter OLDWIT'S Man.

Serv. Sir, my lord Bellamy is come to town : and my lady bid me tell you she has invited him to dinner.

Oldw. Ha ! my lord come to Bury !—Gad forgive me, what's the matter ? ha ?

Wild. What's this ? what, are we linked together ?

Oldw. Oh, you wag, you wag ! this is Sir Humphry ! Ha, ha, ha !—You'll never give over.

Sir Hum. No, faith ; not I.

Oldw. Go home : I'll follow you. [*Exit* Servant.]

Mr. Wildish, pray honour my house at dinner.

Wild. I will ; my Lord Bellamy's my great friend.

Oldw. You shall have Sir Humphry too ; i'faith, we'll be merry, and turn the house out of the window.

Sir Hum. And I will roar, roar most exceedingly.

Oldw. Your humble servant.

Sir Hum. Your servant, sir ; we shall see you ?

[*Exeunt* HUMPHRY and OLDWIT.]

Wild. I will wait on you.—Here, Roger, my gloves, handkerchief, and my sword. My dear Bellamy in town ! This is a happiness I dreamed not of. I thought he had been retired from the world, and would not come to so public a place. You puppy, these are your wits and fine gentlemen I have been plagued with ! A curse on 'em ! What must I undergo for the sake of my love !

Val. I took 'em, sir, and so do most here, for fine gentlemen ; but I wonder Mr. Oldwit is so merry after his disaster. And yet Sir Humphry would make a man burst.

Wild. What disaster ?

Val. Why, sir, his eldest daughter, a great fortune by her mother (his first wife ; for he has had three) about four months since fled, the night before he was to have married her to a fine Bury gentleman.

Wild. I heard so ; but she has sent a letter to let him know that she will not be forced to marry, and for that

dispose of herself; and that then she will: and is in the meantime safe beyond his inquiry.

Val. The young daughter is a great fortune by her mother, who was an heiress.

Wild. He has had a lucky hand at heiresses: but I must find out my dear Bellamy. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE II.—Lord BELLAMY'S *Lodging.*

Enter BELLAMY and Page.

Bell. My kinswoman, who recommended thee, Charles, to my service, told me thou wert a young gentleman of the north whom she knew and was of kin to, and that thou hadst left thy guardian for harsh usage: and she engaged me to conceal and protect thee.

Charles. I can assure your lordship I have done nothing that can make you blush to own me.

Bell. I believe thee; my kinswoman made me give my word to inquire no farther; and I have kept it.

Charles. You have, my good lord.

Bell. I see thy education has been good, and find thou art a virtuous boy, and so ready in thy service, thy diligence has almost outflown my thoughts; yet it has kept pace with my desires; and everything thou dost, thou seem'st to do with pleasure.

Charles. I should be wicked else, having so excellent a lord and master.

Bell. I use thee not as other noblemen do their pages, who let gentlemen's sons ride at the tails of their coaches, crowded with rascally footmen; 'tis a French mode. They used formerly to give 'em the same education with their sons, which made their fortunes; and 'twas a preferment then, for a gentleman's younger son: now they are bred to box and dice, and cheat with the footmen. After they're out of livery, perhaps

they turn to the recreation of the highway; or the top of their fortune is to take up in some troop, and there's an end of 'em.

Charles. I must confess, your usage of me has been so noble, that all the service of my life can never make return

Bell. Thou art too grateful. Thou charm'st me too with thy pretty voice: I'll breed thee up to be my friend. But, prithee, what's the reason that thou, who hast been ready to fly at my command, hast seemed to be uneasy, and unwilling, to come to Bury?

Charles. 'Tis the public time of the Fair, when men of all countries flock hither; and, as I told your lordship, I was afraid of being discovered, and that my guardian would find me out, and seize me. And Heaven knows, I had rather die than leave so good a lord.

Bell. Kindest of youths, I love thee so, I will not part with thee, let who will discover thee.

Charles. My kind, good lord, let me kiss your hands.

Bell. Besides, thou need'st not be seen in the Fair; only I am to dine at Mr. Oldwit's to-day.

Charles. At Mr. Oldwit's! what do I hear? [*Aside.*

Bell. Thou art my little friend; I come to make love to his daughter: she knows me not; but I have seen her, and am extremely taken with her: the old man and I am agreed. I must entertain her with some music: I know thou'lt lend me thy voice.

Charles. Oh Heaven and earth! what killing words are these! Ah me! [*Aside.*

Bell. Why dost thou sigh?

Charles. If your lordship marries, as no lady sure can resist you, I shall be cast off.

Bell. Prithee think not so, dear boy; thou art too secure of my kindness for that.

Charles. I ne'er shall please your lady. Besides, the

Bell. I give thee my hand, I'll never part with thee, till thou quitt'st me.

Charles. I'll quit my life, when I do that. Oh fatal hour, wherein I saw those eyes! How many years of misery are like to hang upon it! [*Aside.*]

Enter WILDISH.

Bell. Ned! my dear Ned! welcome to my arms! This is a happy surprise.

Wild. My dear Bellamy! my dear peer! I could not embrace a mistress with more ardour! I thought you had been so retired I had lost you.

Bell. That was your fault: I have as pleasant a house and seat as most in England, that is thine as much as mine, Ned.

Wild. But 'tis in the country; a pretty habitation for birds and cattle. But man is a herded animal, and made for towns and cities.

Bell. So many pens of wild beasts upon two legs, undermining, lying in wait, preying upon, informing against, and hanging one another: a crowd of fools, knaves, whores, and hypocrites.

Wild. Hey, my renegado countryman! thou hadst once the respect due to good wine, fine women, music, wit and sense, and true pleasure.

Bell. For good wine, I could never be drunk but I did some mad thing or other, which made me ashamed to show my face. For women, those that were worth the having, were hard to come by, and harder to put off: besides, the immorality of the matter gave me anxiety of mind; I saw men of wit, when they came to understanding, gave it over: and, when a thing must be done, 'tis best to do it quickly.

Wild. Thou may'st as well say, since we must die, let's hang ourselves now: no, that's time enough, when we are weary of living. At your years leave women

Bell. He that debauches private women is a knave, and injures others; and he that uses public ones, is a fool, and hurts himself. And for conversation, 'twas all run into parties and politics, and become dull and dangerous: the living were such knaves, I was resolved to converse with the dead, in my study.

Wild. But, in this late scene of action, the knaves are pretty well laid open: and, for all those parties, we could meet with choice company, truly honest, and with whom good wit and sense was stirring, and would pass for current.

Bell. Wit and sense may pass in a room with honest fellows, but noise and nonsense always carry it in the world.

Wild. Pox on this dull wisdom at our age! 'tis as unseasonable as snow in the dog-days. Canst thou think, my dear peer, that thy philosophy can tame the vigour of my appetites?

Bell. I will no more suffer my appetites to master me than fire and water; they are good ministers, while they can be kept under.

Wild. I'd not give a farthing for an appetite that can be curbed. My Stoic, I'd have my appetites high mettled, and run away with me.

Bell. And I must always think a man a slave, till he has conquered himself: for my part, I had almost as lief be in subjection to another's appetite, as to my own.

Wild. This is spleen, wind in the hypochondriacs pent: why, thou wilt prophesy at least.

Bell. Come, dear Ned, we'll debate this matter at more leisure: time will make you of my mind. For I observe, all men of wit reclaim; and only coxcombs persevere to the end of debauchery. But prithee, what makes thee hereabouts? I'll lay my life there's some wench or other in the way.

I come to ease myself from the swearing, lying, roaring, vapouring, cozening, noise and tumult of Newmarket. But I thought thou hadst renounced all crowds, and should as soon have expected a hermit here.

Bell. A little time may satisfy you I have reason.

Wild. Ha! Bell, what pretty boy is this? Ha!

Bell. He is a gentleman's son; he serves me at present. I'll tell thee more *entre nous*. But, in the meantime, he and my little concert shall entertain you.

[*Exit CHARLES.*

Wild. This is somewhat.

Bell. I will not live like an ordinary hunting, hawking puppy; I'll have my city pleasures in the country: of which good music being one, I'll spare some rogues, some dogs, and horses, to have that good.

Enter CHARLES with Instruments.

Wild. I have been visited this morning by three most confounded fops that ever plagued me yet; and they talked of nothing but the wit and breeding of Bury: Trim, Sir Humphry Noddy, and Mr. Oldwit.

Bell. There are those things in Bury; but as 'tis in religion, least among those who talk of them most; men are always proudest of their foibles, and keep their strengths concealed. If a fellow has but a difficulty of speaking, or stutters, his tongue will never lie still.

Wild. A fellow that has one leg shorter than another, will never stand still; but hop, hop, hop, round, round, round.

Bell. Observe any fellow that has a stinking breath, as if a voice were not intended to be heard but smelt, will speak in your very nose: and turn round as often as you will, he turns with you, and your nostrils must have it. Come, begin.

Song.

Bell. Now I have got thee in the country, I'll carry thee to my house and make a convert of thee.

*Enter LA ROCH, a French peruke-maker, with
his man.*

Wild. Hey! La Roch, what makes you here?

La Roch. Serviteur, monsieur; my lor, vot serviteur: I see your laquais below, dat make me come up to kiss your hands.

Bell. How now, Monsieur Cutbeard? what makes you at Bury Fair?

La Roch. Dis is de place dat is fameux for de pretty garl wid de cheveux blond, de farie hair: my man and I come for buy de vite lock, indeed to gette de monee to makee de pot boil, my lor.

Wild. A thought comes into my head: it shall be so. I will have some diversion while I am here.

La Roch. Dat bee de last peruke I send your lordship? Begar, 'tis fine 'air, curl delicate, *morbleu!* You talke o' de Chedreux,¹ he is nobodee to mee; dere is no man can travaille vid mee. Monsieur Wildish has gotte' my peruke on his head: let me see, here is de hair, de curl de boucle, ver good, ver good. If dat fool Chedreux make de peruke like mee, I vil be hanga.

Wild. Hold, good Monsieur Snip-snap, I have another employment for you. Were you ever here before?

La Roch. No.

Wild. That's well; I must have you be a French Count. I remember we had a Count de Brion at London, passed upon the choicest sparks, and best-bred men and ladies: I will have this fellow pass upon the fops of Bury, and amuse the wiser sort.

Bell. You will never be without some mad frolic, or other: but this, certainly, must be very pleasant.

¹ The most famous French hairdresser of the time.

Wild. Of all female creatures my aversion is to the Lady Fantast, and her affected, conceited, disdainful daughter: I will have this fellow personate a French Count, and make love to the daughter.

La Roch. Ha, ha, ha, de French Count! dat be ver well. Ha, ha! Make de love! begar, I come for make de monee. Love! *Morbleu!* de French Count spende de monee, de French peruke-maker make de French Count, he loosee de monee.

Wild. You shall lose no money, you puppy; my man is acquainted with all this country, and shall help your man to buy the wenches' hair, the prettiest wenches in England; and if you be a French Count, you shall have the wenches too; all the town will run after you. You'll be courted by everybody, feasted, and invited to balls, and all meetings; but the Lady Fantast and her daughter will be mad after you.

La Roch. Ha, ha, ha! de French Count! ver well indeed, ha, ha! I make de French Count! Begar, monsieur, I have de Count of my familie, I am a gentleman of Fraunce. Indeed, my parents did condiscant to lette me makè de peruke, for I delighted in it.

Wild. Go, you rogue; you shall do this, I am resolved on't, or I'll cut your throat. You shall have clothes and ornaments of me; here are wholesale men! three or four suits for footmen will do, and we'll help you to the men too. I'll bear all the charges; I'll do it, if it cost me a hundred pound.

Bell. Are you in earnest?

Wild. Ay, by Heaven, it shall be. You shall be called Monsieur le Count de Cheveux; you shall be entertained like a prince; the women will lie with you, as if the devil were in them.

La Roch. Ha! dat be ver good indeed! I was not bred to make peruke, it vas for my diversion I did ittè:

Wild. Yes, to shave them; thou true picture of a French scoundrel! [*Aside.*

La Roch. Dere I did appen to kille de Count for my honneur.

Wild. Then there is a Count missing; you shall supply his place.

La Roch. I fly, dey seize on my land and my chateaux; and begar, it vas ver well for me dat I did delight in make de peruke, ven I vas young indeed.

Wild. This good breeding of yours will qualify you excellently. Why, you'll be adored by the ladies. But of all, I charge you to court Mrs. Fantast; commend her wit and breeding.

Bell. Suppose she falls in love with him in earnest?

Wild. I'd give a hundred pound to see that. Well, Monsieur le Count, let's to my lodging, and fit you for this enterprize.

La Roch. Hold, hold. If dey find me out, vil dey not wippè de French Count? Begar, I no love to be wippè.

Wild. Upon my honour, I'll protect you.

La Roch. Vel, vel; no more to be said: I am Monsieur le Count de Cheveux. *Serviteur, Monsieur my lor, vot très humble serviteur.* Fa, la, la, la.

[*Sings.*

Wild. Come, my lord, your humble servant; we are to meet at dinner. I must be about this business, my heart is set upon it; 'twill make an admirable farce.

Bell. Get thee gone, Ned; thou art a mad fellow. I'll go and take a little air.

La Roch. *Allons, monsieur:* Fa, la, la, la, la!

If my wise conduct you please to rely on,
I'll make as good a Count as Count de Brion.

[*Exeunt.*



ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Mr. OLDWIT'S House.*

Enter Mrs. GERTRUDE.



ERT. Well, I am weary of the life I lead here ; never poor creature was so teased, as I am still with my step-mother and her daughter, the old cuckoo and the young, that tire me continually with the same notes of wit and breeding ; and having themselves nothing but folly and affectation, are always reproaching me for want of both.

Enter LUCE.

Luce. Madam, my lady Madam Fantast, having attired herself in her morning habiliments, is ambitious of the honour of your ladyship's company to survey the Fair.

Gert. Here's a foul copy of one of 'em. I see this folly is contagious. [*Aside.*] Tell her I'll wait on her.

Luce. She will suddenly arrive at this place, where she desires an interview may be betwixt you.

Gert. I will haste for my hoods and gloves, and the rest of my movables, and be here instantly. [*Exit GERTRUDE.*

Luce. A fine young lady this, if she had but half the wit and breeding of my lady.

*Enter Lady FANTAST and her daughter,
Mrs. FANTAST.*

Lady Fan. Come, my sweet daughter, consider what I have said. Thou art in thy maturity of blooming age; I have bred thee to the very acme and perfection of Bury breeding, which is inferior to none in this our island; dancing, singing, guitar, French master. And I'll say that for thee, my jewel, thou hast sacrificed all thy endeavours to attain thy education, which, corroborated by thy acuteness of parts, have rendered thee exactly accomplished, and, together with the excellence of thy beauty, justly admired by the amorous males, and envied by the malicious females.

Mrs. Fan. To all that, which the world calls, wit and breeding, I have always had a natural tendency, a *penchant*, derived, as the learned say, *ex traduce*,¹ from your ladyship: besides, the great prevalence of your ladyship's most shining example has perpetually stimulated me to the sacrificing all my endeavours towards the attaining of those inestimable jewels, than which nothing in the universe can be so much *à mon gré*, as the French say. And for beauty, madam, the stock I am enriched with comes by emanation from your ladyship; who has been long held a paragon of perfection: most *charmant*, most *tuant*.

Lady Fan. Ah, my dear child: I! alas, alas! Time has been, and yet I am not quite gone; but thou hast those attractions which I bewail the want of: poetry, Latin, and the French tongue.

Mrs. Fan. I must confess, I have ever had a tenderness for the Muses, and have a due reverence for Helicon, and Parnassus, and the Graces: but heroic numbers upon love and honour are most *ravissant*, most *suprenant*; and a Tragedy is so *touchant*! I die at a Tragedy; I'll swear I do.

Lady Fan. I must confess, my dear, thy wit has more

¹ This refers to the great scholastic controversy whether the soul is specially created for each individual or derived by

of notoriety than thy beauty; since the pretty various diversions of thy pen have transmitted the fame of thy wit beyond the narrow limits of an island. But it is now high time to manifest thy judgment, in the disposal of thy person; and thou hast rejected a multitude of lovers.

Mrs. Fan. I am so much indebted to nature and education, that I am resolved not unequally to dispose of that person, which (without vanity I may say) nature by its genuine bounty, and art by its friendly additions, have rendered not *disagréable*, or void of *attraits*; but all want of wit and breeding does affect me with that unconquerable *chagrin*, that, eh Gud, I cannot suffer such fellows.

Lady Fan. Mine own dear daughter, to a hair! And, I must confess, we are troubled enough with it in Mr. Oldwit, his daughter, and his companions. Had not my jointure been somewhat entangled, I had never had him. But Mr. Trim is as fine a gentlemen as the sun in all his circuit sees.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, my Eugenius! he is a finished piece of humanity; but has not the estate I would have.

Lady Fan. Sir Humphry Noddy—

Mrs. Fan. Has a very good estate, but wants the noble accomplishments of my Eugenius, whom I intend to preserve for my platonic servant.

Enter Mrs. GERTRUDE.

Sweet Madam Gatty, I have some minutes impatiently expected your arrival, that I might do myself the great honour to kiss your hands, and enjoy the favour of your company into the Fair; which I see, out of my window, begins to fill apace.

Gert. I got ready as soon as e'er I could, and am now come to wait on you.

Lady Fan. Oh, fie, daughter! will you never attain, by mine and my dear daughter's examples to a more

Fie, fie! "I come to wait on you!" You should have said, "I assure you, madam, the honour is all on my side; and I cannot be ambitious of a greater, than the sweet society of so excellent a person." This is breeding.

Mrs. Fan. Ah, this had been *à propos*: observe my lady.

Gert. Breeding! Why, this had been a flam, a mere flam.

Mrs. Fan. Eh, *mon Dieu!* this had been delicate *et bien tournée*. Call generous compliments flams!

Lady Fan. Thus you had shown true breeding.

Gert. Breeding: I know no breeding necessary, but discretion to distinguish company and occasions; and common sense, to entertain persons according to their ranks; besides making a curtsey not awkwardly, and walking with one's toes out.

Mrs. Fan. Eh Gud, eh Gud!

Lady Fan. Let me tell you, you are a pert young thing: you are a curious judge indeed of the art of refined conversation.

Gert. Art! Conversation ought to be free, easy, and natural.

Mrs. Fan. Eh Gud, eh Gud! Sweet madam, despise not art. Can there be any conversation well dressed, as I may say, without French in the first place to lard it?

Gert. Some fops indeed think so, that use it in every sentence.

Lady Fan. Nothing is so confident as ignorance.

Mrs. Fan. *Ars non habet inimicum præter ignorantem.*

Lady Fan. Look you there: I have bred my daughter a linguist.

Gert. A lady may look after the affairs of a family, the demeanour of her servants, take care of her nursery,

tongue ; and this is all I desire to arrive at : and this is to be of some use in a generation ; while your fantastic lady, with all those trappings and ornaments you speak of, is good for no more than a dancing mare, to be led about and shown.

Mrs. Fan. Eh, *mon Dieu !* pray forbear, sweet madam, forbear ; I am not able to hear this blasphemy against true breeding.

Gert. It must needs be pretty French one learns of an Irishman at Bury. I believe 'tis a kind of bastard French.

Lady Fan. Good Mrs. Gatty, you are very confident.

Enter OLDWITT, and hearkens unseen.

Mrs. Fan. Whatever you do, never speak against art.

Gert. Art stiffens and spoils conversation, as painting does faces. If you hear never so many florid coxcombs, they speak all alike ; and see never so many painted women, they look all alike.

Mrs. Fan. Eh, *mon Dieu ! Quel facheux ! Ex quovis ligno, &c.* Mercury's statue is not made of every wood.

Lady Fan. Look you, I know your secret cogitations : because you are so ill bred as to look like a tallow thing, and will not improve your complexion by art, you obliquely reflect upon me and my daughter, for our melioration of nature.

Gert. Come, come, madam ; if you be ready, without a compliment, to go the Fair, I am ready to go with you : but, by my troth, if you look for compliments, you must get them somewhere else. Come, I'll lead you.

[*Exit GERTRUDE.*

Mrs. Fan. Ill breeding, *au dernier point !* Oh, my *chagrin !* I kiss your ladyship's hand.

here, you would have heard a fine deal of ill breeding from your daughter Gatty.

Oldw. I was here at part of your discourse, and I heard nothing but good sense from her.

Lady Fan. Nay, she's like you.

Oldw. Gad take me, I am glad she is not like you.

Lady Fan. I know your ill breeding; but 'tis a shame you have not better cultivated your daughter, as I have mine.

Oldw. Cultivate! A pox on your affected stuff! Should I have made her an affected ass to be laughed at, as you and your daughter are?

Lady Fan. Prodigy of ignorance! my daughter and I laughed at! Whom even the Court, when we are there, perpetually gaze at and admire; and all the beauties and gallants here make their court to!

Oldw. A great many flutterers do flock about you indeed, as small birds would about a cast of owls, to wonder at you.

Lady Fan. This is most stupendous.

Oldw. A pox on this perpetual noise about wit and breeding! You made my daughter by my first wife run away, with teasing her, and persuading me to be such an ass to press her to marry one of your formal fops, against her will; and now you are plaguing this poor girl to make her run away too; but I have agreed upon articles with one that will soon rid you of her.

Lady Fan. Most exorbitant and amazing! 'Twere well, if beholding us could do any good upon her.

Oldw. No doubt it will; as the sight of the drunken slaves did upon the Spartan children. There's wit and reading for her! [*Aside.*

Lady Fan. Were not we well fortified by art and nature, we might be obnoxious to the taint of your and her most unsavoury rusticity. While all the *beau monde*,

in your smoking-room. What punishment do I deserve for making alliance with so much ill-breeding?

Oldw. What plagues have I met with in marrying an affected old lady, who, with her daughter, take themselves to be wits! Their tongues never lie still: at dinner they must have the whole discourse; at dinner, the common-crier, were he there, could not be heard; no, not another woman. 'There's my friend Juvenal for you—wit and breeding!

Lady Fan. My daughter and I no wit, and you have it! this is most astonishing! Ha, ha, ha! If ever you had wit, it is obliterated, antiquated, and buried in the grave of oblivion.

Oldw. No wit! Ounds, now you provoke me. Shall I, who was Jack Fletcher's friend, Ben Jonson's son, and afterwards an intimate crony of Jack Cleaveland and Tom Randolph, have kept company with wits, and been accounted a wit these fifty years, live to be deposed by you?

Lady Fan. Ha, ha, ha!

Oldw. Ha, ha, ha! I, that was a judge at Blackfriars, writ before Fletcher's Works and Cartwright's, taught even Taylor and the best of them to speak? I cannot go to London yet, but the wits get me amongst them, and the players will get me to rehearsal to teach them, even the best of them: and you to say I have no wit! I say, you have not, nor ever had, any beauty.

Lady Fan. Nay, now, Mr. Oldwit, I can bear no longer. Shall I, that in my youth charmed all the gallants of that time, even to fascination; and in my widowhood, but five years since, was adored by Lords spiritual and temporal, and captivated several of their hearts, be thus calumniated? Know, I have more beauty than you can make use of.

Oldw. Indeed, towards you I am somewhat frigid; but some in the world know I have a colt's tooth.

Lady Fan. I should serve you right to have others

Oldw. Thy tooth! the devil of one thou hast but what came out of Bow Lane; three remaining stumps there are, that look like three broken pillars in a ruined cloister. And there's wit for you now, and a clinch to boot.

Lady Fan. Poor, railing buffoon! there's wit! Well, there are some of another mind, concerning my beauty.

Oldw. Prithee take thy course with them: whoever commits adultery with thee, it must be merely the act of the devil; there's nothing of the flesh in it. What a pox, you and your daughter are notorious for out-painting all the Christian Jezebels in England.

Lady Fan. 'Tis false, rude fellow; we only use a wash, and lay on a little red.

Oldw. No more does a wall: but you, for your part, are fain to fill up the chinks in your rivelled skin, as house-painters do the cracks in wainscot, with putty. Pox on't! you would by art appear a beauty, and are by nature a mere mummy. There's wit for you again! 'Gad, I'll pepper you with wit.

Lady Fan. Did I not despise thee for thy want of wit and breeding, these barbarous contumelies would exhaust tears from my eyes.

Oldw. If thou shouldst cry, it would make streaks down thy face; as the tears of the tankard do upon my fat host's belly-pieces. There's wit again for you!

Lady Fan. Farewell, brute. [*Exit Lady FANTAST.*]

Oldw. Fare thee well. He that would have the devil more damned, let him get him to marry a she-wit. Now for the fair. Here! who waits?

Enter a Servant.

Bid the cook get dinner within two hours, at farthest.

SCENE [II. ?] *the Fair, with a great many Shops and Shows, and all sorts of people walking up and down.*

Mrs. FANTAST and GERTRUDE, *masked.*

Gert. 'Tis pleasant to observe the mixture of people

Mrs. Fan. Ah, how pleasant 'twould be if none but the *beau monde* made their *promenade* here! but I hate the *canaille*.

Milliner. What d'ye lack, ladies? fine mazarine hoods, fontanges,¹ girdles, sable-tippets, choice of fine gloves and ribands.

Hosier. Stockings, silk stockings; choice of silk stockings; very fine silk stockings.

Perfumer. All sorts of essences, perfumes, pulvilios,² sweet-bags, perfumed boxes for your hoods and gloves, all sorts of sweets for your linen, Portugal sweets to burn in your chamber. What d'ye lack? What d'ye buy?

Gert. I have no such contempt for the common people: they come near nature, and have no art or affectation; and there are a thousand fops made by art, for one fool by nature.

Mrs. Fan. Oh fie! *Odi profanum vulgus, &c.*

Indian-Gownman. Fine morning-gowns, very rich Indian stuffs; choice of fine atlases,³ fine morning-gowns.

Goldsmith. Will you please to raffle for a tea-pot, a pair of candlesticks, a couple of sconces?

Enter Mr. TRIM.

Trim. Not all the clouds assembled in the firmament can hide, or can eclipse so muffle the sun, but we poor mortals know it shines, and feel the warm effects. Why shouldst Dorinda think to blunt her pointed glories, or conceal the radiant lustre of her conquering beams?

Mrs. Fan. I see, to the quick-sighted Eugenius nothing is obscure. Nor could Eugenius in the dark be hid: that golden tongue and that sweet eloquence would soon reveal him; as the proscribed senator was by his perfumes betrayed.

Trim. How does the bright Dorinda make me blush,

¹ Knots of ribbon worn in the hair, and named from one of

when she commends my eloquence ; and in that very act so much exceeds me !

Mrs. Fan. Fine ! very fine ! *bien tourné*. That thought's very *recherchée*. Observe, madam : this is a true witty and well-bred gentleman.

Gert. Now really, madam, between you and me, this man appears to me a most extraordinary shallow coxcomb as one can possibly see in a summer's day.

Mrs. Fan. Eh Gud, eh Gud ! poor soul, I pity thee—but, *assurment*, nothing can be more engaging than the wit and breeding of Eugenius.

Trim. I see, there is no contending with Dorinda : she will have the ascendant over poor Eugenius ; his small pinnacle must strike sail to her admiral, Wit.

Gert. These fops are very happy ; for if an archangel should tell 'em they were fops, they would not believe it. [*Aside.*]

Trim. Let me present to the fair Dorinda's hands a little offspring of my brain, the tribute of my morning service.

Mrs. Fan. I was just going to present Eugenius with the issue of my teeming Muse, who was delivered this morning of a pastoral : I must needs say, she had a good time, for she had an easy labour ; *Aurora Musis amica*. But pray let me read yours first.

Enter LUCE.

Luc. Oh, madam, does your ladyship hear the news ?

Mrs. Fan. What news, Luce ?

Luc. Oh, madam, such news, as perhaps may not be ungrateful to your ladyship's ears. There is now, even now, arrived a noble French Count ; the finest person my eyes yet e'er beheld : I saw him, heard him speak ; he speaks English. He has the prettiest charming way ! no lady sure can e'er resist him.

Trim. Who can this be ?

afraid I am not in order enough; he'll certainly make addresses to me. How is my dress?

[She lets fall TRIM'S paper; he stoops to take it up, and offers it her; she neglects it.]

Luce. Very French, and very exact.

Mrs. Fan. The report of me has certainly brought him hither. Heaven! a French Count, say you! Now we shall see breeding in perfection; and I am glad I shall have the opportunity of appearing before so great a judge.

Gert. How do you know but this French Count may be an arrant coxcomb?

Mrs. Fan. Oh, madam, madam! I beseech you, betray not your ill breeding. A French Count a coxcomb! *Mon Dieu!*

Trim. It is not, my Dorinda——

Mrs. Fan. When shall our eyes be blest with the sight? When, think'st thou, will he make this place happy?

Luce. My eyes saluted him first upon the Change. His landlord, who was with him, told me what he was. From then I followed him to Cook Row, and so through the Fair to the bowling-green. His air, his mien, and his deportment charmed me so, I could not leave him. There I saw him ride the flying horse, with his equipage, which much delighted him.

Mrs. Fan. Shall we go to the bowling-green? My expectation is on tiptoes, till I behold him.

Luce. That's a rare saying! I'll remember that. My expectation is on tiptoes! Madam, he is gone from thence, and said he would be in the Fair presently.

Enter SIR HUMPHRY NODDY.

Trim. This sudden indifference towards me seems abrupt and temerarious.

1st Wom. Fine mellow pears ; fine bergamy pears ; fine Norwich pears.

2nd Wom. Fine ginger-bread : very good ginger-bread.

Sir Hum. Yonder's my mistress ; I know her, for all her mask. I'll present her with a fairing.

[SIR HUMPHRY buys some ginger-bread.]

Enter several Gentlewomen, two country wenches and two country fellows, and people of all sorts, and walk about the Fair.

Sir Hum. Madam, 'tis not a mask can conceal you from a lover. Whether I see you or no, my heart will leap up to my teeth whenever you come in presence ; as a dead body will bleed at the arrival of the murtherer. Is not that well said, Mr. Trim ?

[Gives TRIM a devilish kick on the shins.]

Trim. 'S death, my shins !

Mrs. Fan. Men's hearts seldom come so near their mouths.

Sir Hum. Madam, let me present you with your first fairing, a heart.

Gert. Of ginger-bread ?

Sir Hum. Ay 'faith, pretty lady.

Gert. Is it a true image of your own ? Did you sit for it.

Sir Hum. Ha ! ha ! ha ! a very good jest ! Udsbud, there's a pair of gloves of the same mettle, to stop your pretty mouth. And, Mr. Trim, here's a wise cap, befitting your gravity and the solidity of your parts, for you.

Trim. Sir, there's an old adage that says, Familiarity breeds contempt. I am past those juvenile jokes.

Sir Hum. Alas, poor old gentleman ! Come, madam, let us walk, and see the diversions of the Fair. I warrant you, I'll make you merry.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, this Count ! Did you see the Count ?

beaux come to town. Will your ladyship raffle a bout or two?

Gert. The activity of this monkey is as ridiculous as the gravity of that baboon.

Enter WILDISH, and walks.

• Oh Heaven! Wildish here! Down, down, my heart: thou foolish heart, why dost thou flutter so? I see he is thus far a man of honour, if all he says in his letters were as true! And yet I know not whether I should wish it.

Enter LADY FANTAST.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, madam! here is the rarest news! Have you heard of the French count?

Lady Fan. Ay, my dear; and therefore am come to bless my eyes. His fame is diffused throughout the town. They say he is the finest gentleman that ever came to Bury.

Wild. Good! It takes as I could wish.

[WILDISH plucks GERTRUDE by the sleeve.

Gert. How now, sir! who are you?

Wild. One who has lost a heart, and apprehends you for it.

Gert. You are somewhat free of carriage.

Wild. Think not, my pretty madcap, that a piece of velvet can conceal you; your eyes strike at every one you level at, like lightning through a cloud.

Gert. Very pretty! Shall I oblige Mr. Trim with this fine expression? He'll give you any money for it.

Trim. Sir—

Wild. Now is this fop setting out his bum for a smart bout at compliment.

Trim. It is so great an honour to our town—

Wild. Sir, your most humble servant.

[WILDISH turns quick upon his toes, and leaves TRIM.]

Trim. Is this his breeding? Indeed, when I left him, he led me not to the door of his lodging.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, *mon Dieu!* here is that London wit, that is a laugher and scoffer! I hear he has made a lampoon upon Bury. I hate the fellow.

Lady Fan. He a wit! Mr. Trim or Sir Humphry would make nothing of him.

Wild. Look you, my dear madcap, I must love you, and will love you. Say what you can, do what you can, I will always haunt you while I am alive, and never leave you when I am dead.

Gert. Nay hold, good Mr. Hothead; I doubt not, but our lives will differ so, that we shall part when we are dead, sir, whatever we do living. And a sure way to part while we are alive would be to marry, which Heaven forbid; then it would certainly follow to some purpose.

Wild. The steel shall sooner willingly desert the loadstone than I my pretty miss.

Gert. You are not sure in earnest.

Wild. By Heaven, and all the powers——

Gert. I mind vows in love no more than oaths in anger. That I were sure once that you were in love with me!

Wild. There is nothing to prove it to you which I will not undertake.

Gert. Your hand upon't.

Wild. My heart upon't; which here I present you.

Gert. Now have I one to domineer over. Tremble! for I will make thee such an example as shall be a terror to thy sex, and revenge all the insolences committed upon mine.

Wild. I am prepared for all thy tyranny, good Semiramis.

Gert. I will make thee fetch and carry, and come at my foot like a spaniel.

Sir Hum. Come, gentlemen and ladies, come down guineas apiece, and raffle for a teapot. Come, Jack Trim, Jack; Mr. Wildish, ladies.

Trim. Jack! Jack! Ill-bred. For complaisance and breeding sake, I'll do't.

Enter LORD BELLAMY.

The Lord Bellamy! My lord, I can assure your lordship, there is not a person among the race of mankind—

Bell. Sir, I am your humble servant. My dear Ned! I see here is all the good company.

Wild. My dear lord, I am glad you are come. Here is the best company in Bury.

Bell. 'Tis a delicate morning: I have been sucking in the sweetest air in England.

Sir Hum. My noble Lord, your most humble servant! 'Tis indeed very fine weather; it used to be Bury-foul, instead of Bury-fair. Is not that a pretty clinch, Jack?

[He gives him a rap on the back.]

Trim. Sir, let me tell you, there is a Spanish proverb, which says, *Whego¹ de manos, whego de Vilanos.*

Sir Hum. Do you call me villain in Spanish? I shall reckon with you for that.

Bell. I'll put in for a raffle with these ladies. Come, madam, will you raffle for a heart?

Gert. No, my lord; that is usually a light, hollow thing, and not sterling neither: I am for a massy plate that will endure the touch.

Bell. Mine will endure the strictest touch. If your beauty be equal to your shape and wit, you conquer all you look on.

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. What do I see? that is my sister! He is already fixed upon my ruin, my death. Sister, I ne'er

till now could wish thy beauty less. If not discovered, I am at least undone.

Bell. Come, Charles, thou shalt raffle too: here's a guinea for him.

Enter OLDWIT.

Oldw. My lord, your lordship's most humble servant.

Bell. Sir, I kiss your hands.

Oldw. What a pox, is this puss my wife here? I'll lay my life she hears of the French Count: I was in hopes she would have been sullen, and we might have had the house to ourselves. Come, come, off with your foolish masks. My lord, this is my wife.

Lady Fan. And this is my daughter.

[*BELIAMY salutes her.*

Bell. I dare swear she is.

[*Aside.*

Oldw. Mr. Wildish.

[*WILDISH salutes Lady FANTAST and Mrs. FANTAST.*
This, my lord, is my daughter.

Bell. Madam, your father has commanded me to do myself the honour of the world I am most ambitious of.

Gert. You are resolved, my lord, your ambition shall be no danger to the Government.

Bell. I own no Government but yours: others but rule the body; you, the mind.

Charles. How can I hear my own sad funeral peal?

Oldw. Mr. Wildish, my daughter.

Wild. So, madam, you have my heart; 'tis flown; I could not hold it: look to it, and make much on't, and see that it comes to no damage; I shall require it whole and safe.

Gert. 'Tis a light one, and always ready to whistle off at any game; and as ready to be lured back again: but, if I have it, I'll use it so, it shall be glad to be gone.

Gert. Raptures are no more signs of love, than huffing is of courage.

[*Sir HUMPHREY steals to OLDWIT as he leans upon his cane, strikes it away, and flings him almost upon his nose.*

Oldw. Oh, you arch wag you! are you there? Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hum. Yes, that I am. Ha, ha, ha! Come, down with your guinea. Now we have enough for a teapot, and a pair of sconces.

Bell. She's delicately handsome as an angel! what thinkest thou, my boy?

Charles. With submission, my good lord, I think she is mortal: I am not surprised with her beauty. Look narrowly; does she not look like a shrew?

Bell. No; she is all sweetness in perfection.

[*They throw the dice in order.*

Charles. I wish you find her not so: Fame whispers somewhat of that kind.

Enter the French Count with his equipage. The shopkeepers all cry their things. The COUNT stares about him, munching of pears.

Lady Fan. Daughter, daughter! yonder comes the French Count! It must be he.

Mrs. Fan. *Mon Dieu!* it is he! Nay, if quality or breeding 'scapes my eye, I have lost my cunning. What an air! What a mien is there!

Count. Nicholas.

Nic. Monsieur?

Count. Take de notice of dose two garle, vatch dem; dey have de very fine ayre.

Mrs. Fan. His person is *charmant*. *Tuant*¹ his air, victorious his mien: *mon pauvre cœur!*

Wild. I could not wish better success.

¹ This word, correctly printed in the first edition, became in

Gert. A most *charmant, tuant* mien, in eating bergamies : he out-crunches a schoolboy on a holiday. I'll lay my life, he is an arrant coxcomb.

Count. Page, settè my cravat-string. Ver well, ver well.

Lady Fan. He is an incomparable person !

Bell. Thy farce is like to take admirably : the rogue looks very stately and fantastical !

Wild. No gudgeons ever took their baits more greedily.

Count. *Monsieur, serviteur tres-humble.* Have you forgottè me ?

Wild. Monsieur le Count de Cheveux !

Count. De same. I had de honneur to wait upon you vid my regiment of gens d'armes, on de right attaque at Luxemburg. Oh, my Lord Bellamy, I am surprise ver much ! you did charge my regiment at de battle of Mons. I will say no more of dat ; but, begar, you did make us turnè de back ; vich de regiment never did before, nor since ; but is all one for dat, *serviteur très-humble.*

Bell. The rogue acts it admirably !

Wild. You are welcome into England.

Count. I come to see de fine lady, de grand beauteè English ; vich, begar, is beyond all de varle : yes indeed.

Bell. You have learnt the language ?

Count. I speak a little. I did keepè de company vid de English officeers, de ver brave gentlemen indeed, to learnè de language ; for I did resolvè to com dis plas, for see de beauteè and the wit of England.

Trim. Perhaps your most auspicious stars could not have guided your wandering course to a more proper region of the earth, than this little city of Bury, for the full satisfaction of both these curiosities you are pleased to mention. Nor is in all the regions of earth you have surveyed a person more devoted to your service than

Count. Monsieur Jean Trim, you do me de grand honneur; begar, me am your humble *serviteur*—*Jerny bleu*, dis fellow be one great fool indeed. [*Aside.*

Wild. That is the lady and daughter I told you of: this is the lady's husband.

Count. Is ver well: lette me alone for dat.

Mrs. Fan. A most admirable person of a man! His eyes *brillant*, and *fière*! My heart is gone. He may say, as Cæsar did *Veni, vidi, vici*.

Lady Fan. My eyes never beheld a parallel.

Mrs. Fan. Eh Gud! how the French noblesse outshines ours! Methinks, they look like tailors to 'em.

Sir Hum. Monsieur, your most humble servant: welcome to Bury, as I may say.

Oldw. My lord Count, you are heartily welcome to Bury: and I beg the honour of your company at dinner, at my house.

Count. Messieurs, me kissè your hands: me did tinke to invitè de shief magistratè, I don know vat you call him; oh, is alderman, to takè de collation vid me; buttè me can no refusè de faveur.

Mrs. Fan. I am transported with joy!

Lady Fan. Daughter, speak to him in French; he seems already captivated with your looks.

Count. You are appy in de conversation of de very fine ladeè; buttè to lette you know my skill, my cunning, me vil gage a hundred pistole, dat dat fine ladeè, and her very pretty sister, are de French ladeè.

Oldw. Ounds, this Count will make my damned affected toad so proud, the devil would not live with her. French, and sister with a pox!

Lady Fan. We have often bewailed the not having had the honour to be born French.

Count. Pardon me; is impossible.

Mrs. Fan. *Mon foi, je parle vrai*: we are mere English *assurance*.

Oh, lettè mè see ; de fader is de lawyere, an she learnè of him at de Temple ; is de law French.—I am amazè ! French lookè, French air, French mien, French movement of the bodee ! *Morbleu !* Monsieur, I will engage 4,500 pistolè dat dese two sister vere bred in France, yes. *Teste bleu*, I can no be deceive.

Mrs. Fan. *Je vous en prie*, do not ; we never had the blessing to be in France ; you do us too much honour. Alas, we are forced to be content with plain English breeding. You will bring all my blood into a blush. I had indeed a *penchen* always to French.

Count. *Penchen !* vat is dat ? Oh, is law French ?—You puttè de very great confusion upon me : I fought it was impossible to find that mien, air, wit, and breeding out of France.

Oldw. French ! why, my lord Count, this is my wife ; this is her daughter.

Count. Daughtere ! dis young ladee havè de daughtere ! Begar, you makè my head turn round, an mine hair stand up : is impossible. Pardon me.

Lady Fan. My dear sweet lord Count, you pose me now with your grand civilities : she is my daughter ; I was married indeed exceeding young.

Count. Begar, madam, den you be de pretty modere, she de pretty daughtere, in de whole varle. Oh, mine heart, mine heart ! dose eyes, dat air, ave killè me ! I broughtè de heart out of France, and I ave lost it in dis plas : is gone, madam ; an *morbleu !* you see now de French Count vidout a heart.

Trim. With what frigidity she looks on me ! and with what warm transport she seems to pierce the Frenchman through ! *Varium et mutabile semper femina.*

Re-enter BELLAMY, WILDISH, and GERTRUDE.

Wild. What would you give for such a servant ?

Gert. Just as much as I would for you. * I had not so

methinks France should be the last. I like not these apish Counts; they're mere kickshaws.

Bell. You judge right, madam, of this Count at least.

Gert. Indeed, he seems to me a very choice coxcomb.

Count. Oh, madam, you have de fine hair, de very fine hair! dose tresses conquer de lovere; Cupid make his net of dat hair, to catchè de heart: de couleur delicat, better den my peruke is great deal: begar, if I had dat hair I vould makè two, tree peruke of dat.

Wild. Pox on you, you rascal! You are no barber, sir, you are a Coufit.

Count. Havè de patience: dat is, me could makè de peruke two, tree; buttè I vould makè de locket, de bracelet, and de pretty love-knack.

They all cry their wares. Enter several Jack-Puddings, and give papers.

1st Pud. A very good monster! a very pretty delicate monster: the like ne'er seen in England! The monster is just now beginning.

2nd Pud. Pimper le pimp, the High-German juggler! Pray walk in and take your places; 'tis the last time of showing this morning.

Count. Vat is pimp? Vat, does he lettè a de whore at de Fair?

1st Pud. A most delicious, dainty monster, the most delightful monster, the prettiest monster ever was seen! The most admirable, the most incomparable monster!

Count. Ha, ha, ha! Begar, I likè dis Jean Pudding ver well; I vill talkè vid him, begar: he makè me laugh dis morning, he almost killè me.

Wild. You rogue, remember you are a Count, and no barber, puppy.

Mrs. Fan. You see his wit and judgment! he finds out good breeding immediately.

Gert. Yes, he has found wit in a Jack-Pudding.

and of de wit : de very pretty man, and de very good company ; yes, indeed.

Mrs. Fan. No doubt, sir, *assurancement oui*.—Look you, Mrs. Gatty.

[*Sir HUMPHRY finds a country Peasant leaning upon his staff ; he strikes it away, and he falls backward. Another Peasant knocks Sir HUMPHRY down : he rises, and draws. Several of the mobile join with the Peasant : The gentlemen draw, and rescue him. The ladies shriek, and run away.*

Count. Begar, dat be very merry gentilman ; he have de great deal of wit, *assurancement oui*. *Teste bleu*, de insolence of peasant English !

Wild. Death ! let's in and rescue him.

Bell. Sir Humphry, you have suffered for your wit, I see.

Oldw. Only a head broken, that's all : the inside of your head will often endanger the outside, Sir Humphry.

Sir Hum. Pish, this is nothing. Pox on't, an accident ; a mere accident. Gad take me, I'll have my jest, let what will come on't.

Count. Insolent peasant ! Begar, me vill killè two, tree tousand peasant. Strikè de gentilman ! Sire, *morbleu*, me vill helpe you to killè de damn peasant.

Oldw. Come, come to my house ; my daughter's woman shall lay you on a plaister.

Count. I vould be glad to putte my cutto into de body of the peasant ; they have fright de ladeè.

Bell. But, Monsieur le Count, our peasants have quarter-staves, and if gentlemen go to run them through they will knock 'em down ; and we commend em for't.

Count. De peasant ! begar, de peasant be de slave, de dog, *morbleu* !

Bell. Our peasants wear shoes and stockings, and lie warm ; and have good meat and drink in their houses.

Wild. Your king is a king of dogs then ; but how much greater is ours, who is a king of men and free

Count. Your king great as our king! Jerny, your King can do noting; there is de law, de Parliament, I don know vat, begar: my king can send for my head, when he pleas; yes, indeed, hum.

Oldw. My lord Count, 'tis almost dinner-time.

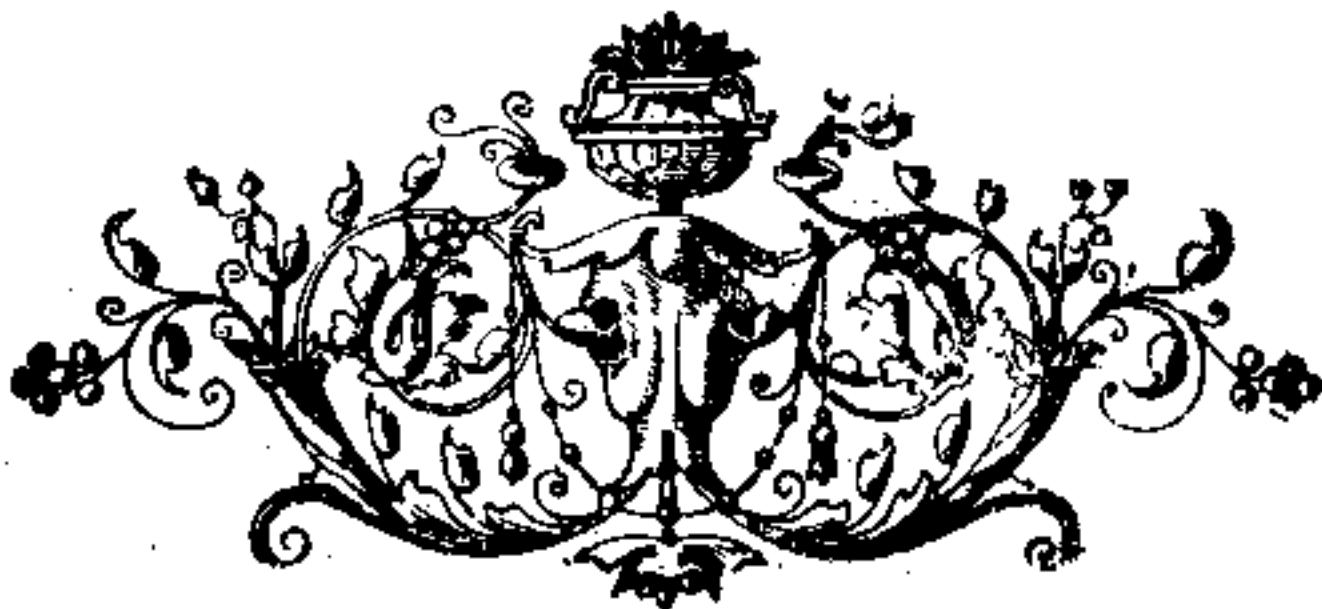
Wild. The rogue talks as if he were of the blood royal.

Bell. Yes, like the next successor.

Count. Yes, begar, he can send for my head: and dat be very good for him.

Wild. But my king cannot send for my head when he pleases.

Count. *Morbleu*, dat be very good for you; yes, indeed. [*Exeunt.*





ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Enter OLDWIT, LORD BELLAMY, WILDISH, SIR HUMPHRY, COUNT, *and* TRIM.



OLDW. Come, my lord Count, my Lord Bellamy, and gentlemen, may good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both, as Macbeth says. Ah, I love those old wits.

Wild. You are a wit in your heart.

Old. Ay, 'faith, so I am; and I love to be merry at meals. Ah, wit is as necessary as good wine at table.

Sir Hum. Ay, 'faith, so 'tis. I summon up all my wit at dinner.

Oldw. My lords and gentlemen, we'll into my smoking-room, and sport about a brimmer; and wit shall fly about like hail-shot. Oh, the wit that I have heard in that room.

Bell. We will wait on you soon; but I have promised the ladies an entertainment, with a little concert of music by my own servants, who are ready now. And I desire you will call the ladies, sir.

Oldw. If your lordship please, but, faith, we had better be a toping.

Sir Hum. Did you ever hear the Thetford music? ¹

¹ This is not quite so "local" a remark as it may seem. The Thetford fiddlers had been in great request when Charles II. kept

Bell. Not I, sir.

Sir Hum. 'Sbud, they are the best music in England. There's the best shawm and bandore, and a fellow that acts Tom of Bedlam to a miracle! And they sing "Charon, oh, gentle Charon" and "Come, my Daphne" better than Singleton and Clayton did.

Wild. Here's the pleasure of country conversation, Bellamy! Had not a man better be condemned to the galleys than endure it?

Bell. I am of your opinion, Ned; and for that reason never have such company at my house. If I have, 'tis but for once; for country gentlemen, unless you repay their visit, are too proud to see you twice; and I never visit any but such as I like very well.

[Sir HUMPHRY *dumfounds the Count with a smart râp on the shoulders.*

Count. *Morbleu*, vat is dat? Monsieur Wildish, did you hittè me?

Wild. Not I, monsieur.

Count. Nor you, my lore?

Bell. Not I, Monsieur le Count.

[Sir HUMPHRY *raps him again.*

Count. *Ventre bleu!* is dere again! Sire, vat you mean by dat, to strike me between de head and de shouldere?

Trim. My lord, if your honour had given yourself the leisure circumspectly to have made inquisition into any part of the history of my life and breeding, or into the sedate composure and serenity of my mind, you might easily have collected that I am a person that either never exercised myself in such juvenile and jocular diversions, or, at least, have totally abandoned them.

Count. Begar, dis be de very great fop, *Teste bleu*, I no understanda him. [Sir HUMPHRY *raps him again.*] Agen? is de diable. Ah, *mai foi*, is dat merry gentilman.

Sir Hum. Nothing, nothing at all, my lord Count, among friends. I can't forbear my jest, i'faith; let's kiss and be better acquainted.

Count. Vjd all mine heart. [*Kiss.*] Ha! who shave your face? Lette me see: he leavè two, tree, four great stumpe dat pricke my countenance. Oh fie! dese barbiers English can do nothing. If I would takè de trade [*snaps his fingers*], begar, I would starve dem all.

[*Snaps his fingers again.*]

Wild. Sirrah rogue, remember you are a Count still.

Count. Is all one: I sometime take delight to shave de noblesse of France for my plaisir.

Enter CHARLES with the music, OLDWIT, and Lady, Mrs. FANTAST, and GERTRUDE, Women, and Chambermaids.

Oldw. Now, my lord, let the music strike up; here are the women: I long to be at brimmers.

Sir Hum. Now for a fit of mirth.

Bell. Come, Charles, begin.

[*They sing an Italian song of two parts.*]

You must excuse it; 'tis country music, madam.

Gert. 'Tis admirable! the Court has no better.

Lady Fan. You must be putting in with your ill breeding! If any traveller should affirm that Italy afforded better I should humbly demand his pardon.

Mistress Fan. I am swallowed up in admiration! *je suis astonné!* I am only in doubt whether the harmonious composition or the elegant performance be most *charmant*.

Count. Dat is admirable *bien dict*, madam!

Oldw. I had a daughter that sung——But, no more of her.

Charles. What do I hear? I'll haste away. Farewell!

[*Exit CHARLES.*]

Gert. I never heard a voice and manner so like

her, but that he's of another complexion. But he was so bashful he would not show his face.

Sir Hum. My lord, can they sing "Lilly Burlero," or have they e'er a merry song?

Bell. My servants are no fiddlers.

Oldw. Come, come, my lords and gentlemen, into my smoking-room. Women, go pack into the drawing-room and play at toe-gleek or ombre; go!

Mrs. Fan. Oh, madam, get the French Count with us, or I am ruined. Oh, he is the finest personage and most agreeable!

Lady Fan. Good Mr. Oldwit, you will betray your ill breeding. Entertain one of the French noblesse with smoking and sotting! He shall go with us. You show your wit, and not a word of French among you!

Oldw. 'Sdeath, my wit! dare you profane my wit? Thou old, ill-bred, silly creature, I'll teach thee better breeding and make thee submit to thy lord and master.

Count. Sir, I beg pardon; I am for de ladee; I no drink, I no smoke. Come, madam, vee will play at de *petites jeux*, or something or oder. Begar, de smoke spoil my orangery and pulvilio.

Mistress Fan. Oh, I love *de petites jeux extrêmement*.

Trim. I am also for the ladies, to whom I have ever sacrificed all my devoir. Madam, I kiss your hands.

Mistress Fan. Pish! But as I was saying, monsieur—

Trim. Ha! must I be sacrificed to that kickshaw of a Frenchman? It shall not be long ere he receive a cartel from me.

Sir Hum. Mr. Oldwit is so importunate that I cannot leave him yet, i'faith, but I'll steal away and pay my duty to you.

Mistress Fan. No, no, Sir Humphry, no matter. The Count is an accomplished gentleman. Monsieur, you were speaking—

rival! I will take an occasion to kick that damned Count most exceedingly.

Oldw. Daughter, meet me half an hour hence without fail in the great dining-room above.

Gert. I will, sir.

Wild. Pray let it be within a quarter of an hour, for most important reasons I will give you there.

Oldw. I have contrived an opportunity for your lordship to be private with your mistress, my lord.

Bell. You infinitely oblige me, sir.

Oldw. Come, now let's all into my smoking-room. Go, womankind, pack away to your cards and your tea.

[*Exeunt* COUNT and Ladies.]

Trim. Mr. Oldwit, I humbly take my leave to withdraw with the ladies.

Oldw. No, 'faith, shall you not. Sir Humphry, take him by one arm, and I'll take him by the other.

Trim. Gentlemen, gentlemen, commit not a rape upon me, I beseech you; I drink not between meals. Did you know how averse I am—Sir, sir, I would not be intoxicated for the universe; sir, sir.

Oldw. Come, my lord, and Mr. Wildish.

[*TRIM* talks all the while they hale him.]

Bell and Wild. We wait on you.

Bell. What are we condemned to? [*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE II.]

Re-enter OLDWIT, LORD BELLAMY, WILDISH, Sir HUMPHRY, and TRIM.

Oldw. Here, where is this damned butler? Bring the monteath¹ and bottles. Well, Mr. Wildish, you are one of the top London wits.

Wild. Not guilty, upon my honour.

Oldw. No matter for that. But did you ever hear more wit fly about a dinner at London? Such broadsides and such merriment, my lord?

Wild. Yes, indeed, a great deal of wit did fly about the room.

Sir Hum. Sir, your humble servant. When my lady asked me for a piece of rabbit you remember I told her it was a raw bit, for 'twas not roasted—ha, ha, ha!

Trim. That was a good jest indeed.

Sir Hum. She asked me if I would have any custard; I told her I was not such a fool to refuse it.

Oldw. And when she asked me, Will you have any woodcock, husband? I answered, No; I will have some goose, wife. She thought to have put the woodcock upon me, and I put the goose upon her, i'faith.

Sir Hum. Ha, ha! Very! excellent!

[*OLDWIT and he laugh.*]

**Trim.* These gentlemen, Mr. Wildish, are witty; I must confess, they want not salt, and are indeed very jocose; but I would gladly hear something from yourself, and my lord's honour, that savours more of solidity, than what they hitherto have produced.

Wild. Are you always thus witty, Sir Humphry?

Sir Hum. Oh, ay. The judges, when they come the circuit, certainly send for me: they love my company.

Bell. Do judges love this way of wit?

Sir Hum. Ever while you live; ay, and your serjeants, and doctors of divinity too. The last time I dined in such company I told a story of a doctor of divinity, whose wife used to entertain him with three dishes every day: bitter, pout, and tart. There was such a laughing, they roared out again: the ladies tyhee'd under their napkins; I am the son of a whore, if the tyhee did not take a reverend old gentlewoman as she was a drinking, and she squirted the beer out of her nose, as an Indian does tobacco. Ha, ha, ha!

Oldw. Prithee, dear Sir Humphry, forbear; I am not able to bear it: I have laughed myself sore. Mr. Trim,

concise parts, and exceeding jocular ; but my way is to affect being more grave and solid.

Oldw. Grave and solid ! Come, come, you want a bottle. Why, sirrah, butler ! come quickly. You shall have a whisking bumper.

Trim. Sir, I protest against bumpers : I would not drink a bumper for the universe.

Enter Butler, placing glasses and bottles.

Oldw. Rascal, make haste, you lazy elephant : and, d'ye hear, bring me my horn I use to drench the restive drinkers with. I'll make you take your dose.

Trim. That men should cloud the faculties of their noble souls, and put their minds, as 'twere, into a mist !

Wild. Why, you can make a joke, Sir Humphry, upon anything.

Sir Hum. I seldom fail, thank God.

Wild. Let's hear now, upon the wainscot.

Sir Hum. Pshaw, waw ! 'tis weak wainscot.

Bell. How so ? 'tis good Danish oak.

Sir Hum. Ha, ha, ha ! you know, the weakest goes to the wall : the wainscot goes to the wall ; *ergo*, weak wainscot. Ha, ha !

Oldw. Ha, ha, ha ! passing good !

Sir Hum. I am ready again : reprieving wainscot.

Wild. How so ? The devil can't find that out.

Sir Hum. Ha, ha, ha ! why, wainscot saves many a hanging.

Oldw. Ha, ha ! Admirable ! for if I had not wainscoted my rooms, I must have had hangings. He'll kill me some time or other.

Bell. Upon the window.

Sir Hum. Why, 'tis a damned mutinous window ; for 'tis full of quarrels : you shall never take me at a why not.

Wild. Upon the looking-glass

Sir Hum. Because it makes reflections, ha, ha!

Wild. Upon the day.

Sir Hum. Upon the day? Ha, hum; why, 'tis a scabby day.

Wild. A scabby day?

Sir Hum. Ay, because the sun's broken out.

Oldw. For the love of Heaven, dear friend, not so fast: I cannot suffer it. Come, sirrah, a bumper.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, there are four gentlemen come to wait on you.

Old. Who? Butler, remove the things into my parlour; this room's too little. Come, gentlemen; I beseech you, secure the prisoner. [*They lay hold on TRIM.*

Trim. Sir, you have company enough; I beseech you, I disclaim drink between meals. [*Exeunt.*

[SCENE III.]

Enter GERTRUDE.

Gert. Wildish is not here yet; I am come somewhat before my time, to fly from the horrible impertinence in the drawing-room. I'll lay my life this French Count is some idle scoundrel, and an impostor.

Enter WILDISH.

Wild. Madam, your most humble servant: you have not stayed long, I hope.

Gert. Not at all for you, I assure you, sir; my father appointed me——

Wild. Not this quarter hour yet, by my watch.

Gert. It wants nothing by mine: but you sparks have such vanity, that you are ready to turn everything to your own advantage. Can you believe I come to meet you here!

Wild. Is it not fitter for your youth and beauty to meet an honest young fellow, who is in love with you to madness, than an old fellow with musty sayings, old

Gert. Don't abuse my father behind his back. He is wise! No wiser than yourself: He is a Bury wit, as you are a London one.

Wild. I a wit, madam? You are resolved to use your sovereign power over me; and I'll show you my passive obedience. Do you swagger like a tyrant, you shall find I can bear like a slave.

Gert. Yes, you can act a slave for a time in hopes of making me one ever after.

Wild. Ah, madam, those eyes were made to conquer, and preserve their conquests: where'er they come, they'll govern always.

Gert. For all that, if I were married to you (which Heaven avert) you would, within three months, be apt to think my maid's eyes, though a dowdy, more victorious.

Wild. It is impossible; I could as soon prefer a farthing candle to the sun.

Gert. Nay, I shall never try.

Wild. I am resolved, I'll never leave you: I will wait upon your person, or watch about your house, continually.

Gert. But I'll command you from me; I'll try my dominion.

Wild. In whatever I can, I will obey you: but you may as well command your shadow from you, in the sunshine.

Gert. I'll call in aid, to remove you farther.

Wild. Not bombs or cannons can do that. While you are awake, I'll ne'er be from you; and when you sleep, I'll watch, and sigh, and sing my complaints about your house.

Gert. Sure you dare not be thus bold!

Wild. By Heaven, I cannot help it: and look to it; for this in Bury (as all little towns are full of tattling and censure) will bring scandal to you, at least, if it does not produce love in you.

Gert. For love, I am sure it shall not: and for

Wild. Wherever you go, you have fast hold on my heart-strings, and will tug me along with you.

Gert. If I have, I'll tug you, I'll warrant you, till I crack them. These are flams: I'll to London; there I shall be lost to you, like a hare in a hare-warren, and you shall yelp no more after me.

Wild. You are so fair, so bright, above all others, that I shall follow you by your track of light, and never miss you.

Gert. Are there any lovers thus impudent, to think to procure love by troubling one?

Wild. Is it impudence to own your power, and my weakness? In short, madam, I am resolved to haunt you worse than any beaux, and pelt you with billets doux some fifteen times a day.

Gert. What, like one of those odious creatures, will you dress at me? and tie cravats at me? and strut like a turkey-cock, and prune yourself?

Wild. Even so; and stare, and goggle at you, and never have my eyes off you, while I side-box you in the Playhouse.

Gert. What, where the beaux draw up three ranks deep every day?

Wild. Yes.

Gert. Well, and I'll never cast my eyes upon you for a whole Play together.

Wild. That will be over-acted; and cunning intriguers will censure you from that.

Gert. Very fine! But I assure you, if you join with the beaux, you shall never be looked upon by me: for there is not upon earth a more odious sight, than those boxes full of ugly beaux. I observe, the beaux now are the ugliest hatchet-faced fellows about town.

Wild. Fellows of five-and-fifty, with grizzly beards, set up for beaux: and among these will I herd, when you are at a Play, that I may ogle you, fair.

Gert. Then will I leave the Play

Gert. And to the Park.

Wild. So will I; where I will side-glass¹ you, turn when you turn——

Gert. Then will I leave the Park.

Wild. So will I, and follow you to the Mall.

Gert. You will not dare, sure?

Wild. Yes I will: and strut up to you, with a slur and a coupee; sing a silly new song or two softly in your ear, and put on an air of gaiety, as if I had succeeded.

Gert. I'll soon shake you off, and go to the drawing-room.

Wild. No sooner there, but I am with you: and 'tis as good a scene of ogling, as any.

Gert. Sure, I shall cast you off when I go to church.

Wild. The beaux are the most constant churchmen: You shall see troops of 'em perked up in galleries, setting their cravats. There you shall be sure to find me: and I will stare you out of your prayers. In short, my dear, sweet, pretty madcap, I am resolved never to give thee over while I have breath.

Gert. This is most amazing! Art not thou a very impudent fellow, to talk thus? Do you call this making love! Why, this is making war; worse than blockades and sieges, which they write of in Gazettes.

Wild. It is a gentle siege: but I will never raise it. I may fall dead before your fort.

Gert. And that you shall, before you take it. What a dissembling jade am I now! [*Aside.*]

Wild. Then will I haunt you at noon, and dead of night——

Gert. You will come a faithful humble bee, and hum, and buz, as the *Rehearsal* says. [*A noise of one coming up stairs.*] Here comes somebody! I'll not have the scandal npon me of being taken alone with you. [*Exit.*]

Enter Lord BELLAMY.

Wild. Oh, my lord, I have had the advantage of you, in stealing from your confounded company before you.

Bell. You have so ; but there's great inquiry made after you.

Wild. We were bad enough with our punning fools ; but that new detachment of drunkards and visitants made 'em completely the most confounded company I ever was condemned to. Here are the fruits of the country ! Prithee, my dear peer, fling off this melancholy thought of retirement, and let us enjoy thee again in London : let me not lose my dearest friend for a fit of the spleen or two.

Bell. Dear Ned, if anything could tempt me to that noisy town, thou, and some choice friends, whose conversation I extremely value, might do it : but I am weary of it, and dote upon my quiet retirement.

Wild. Man is not self-sufficient : he was made a sociable animal, and must have conversation.

Bell. And that, by a man of a good estate, as you and I have, may be had in the country.

Wild. Merry meetings may be had, but not so frequently, as your Sessions : and when you think you have a choice company, in rushes some loud obstreperous hunter, hawker, or jockey, good for nothing else, and roars about dogs, kites, and horses ; and spoils that meeting. To keep open house, and entertain the neighbouring coxcombs, is worse than being host of an inn : and to meet company elsewhere, is to be poisoned with damned wine.

Bell. I take care to meet none but good company ; and wherever we meet, we take a course to have as good wine from London as any there : and at my own house, I will entertain none but good company.

Wild. Then the country gentlemen, who are most of 'em ill company, will hate you, and you will have no

Bell. He that esteems himself by another man's opinion is an ass. My tenants I make much of.

Wild. But what can be the diversion of a country life? A man must be waked at three in a morning, by the cracked voices of huntsmen, with damned bugle-horns, and the confounded yelps of curs; and for want of friendship with men, divert themselves with their enmity to beasts; and hunt, as if the devil were in 'em, till at dark night they are scarce able to dismount their horses.

Bell. They are fops, Ned, that make a business of sport. I hunt with my harriers half a dozen heats in a morning, for health and an appetite: and, at dinner time, let 'em be in never such full cry, I knock off.

Wild. There is some reason in that; but your true country 'Squire lives in boots all the winter, never talks or thinks of anything but sports, as he calls 'em: and if an ill day comes, saunters about his house, lolls upon couches; sighs and groans, as if he were a prisoner in the fleet; and the best thing he can find to do is to smoke, and drink, and play at back-gammon, with the parson.

Bell. These are of the strictest order of hunters, such as keep journals of every day's hunting, and write long letters of fox-chases from one end of England to the other. Though these are fops, Ned, a reasonable man may enjoy himself very well in the country.

Wild. How so?

Bell. I have a noble house, an air pure and uncorrupted.

Wild. Which are to be had in St. James's Square and Hyde Park.

Bell. I view my stately fields and meads, laden with corn and grass; my herds of kine and flocks of sheep; my breed of horses: my delicate gardens full of all sorts of fruits and herbs; my river full of fish, with ponds,

kinds in my fields and woods ; my parks for venison ; my cellar well furnished with all variety of excellent drinks : and all my own, Ned.

Wild. All these things have we at London. The product of the best cornfields at Queenhithe ; hay, straw, and cattle at Smithfield ; with horses too. Where is such a garden in Europe, as the Stocks Market ? Where such a river as the Thames ? Such ponds and decoys, as in Leadenhall Market, for your fish and fowl ? Such game as at the poulterers ? And instead of parks, every cook's shop for venison, without hunting, and venturing neck or arms for it. And for cellars, from Temple Bar to Aldgate ; and all that I have use of, my own too, since I have money.

Bell. But I have pleasure in reading the *Georgics*, and contemplating the works of nature.

Wild. I contemplate the chief works of nature—fine women ; and the juice of the grape, well concocted by the sun.

Bell. Your fine women are a company of proud, vain fops and jilts, abominably daubed and painted ; and I had rather kiss a blackamoor, with a natural complexion, than any such. And, besides, many of them are so unsound, that making love is become as dangerous as making war ; and the wounds and scars are dishonourable to boot. Then, for your wine, 'tis attended with such surfeits, qualms, headaches, late hours, quarrels and uproars, that every scene of drunkenness is a very Bedlam.

Wild. Poor Bellamy ! thou wert never happy, since thou left'st off those noble maxims, *Beati non numerant horas*. Measure not your time by hour-glasses, but by wine-glasses. Oh, the sweet of a brimmer at midnight ! The night was made for beasts to sleep in, and for man to watch in.

Bell. And if I have no other misfortune but the

friend breaking a collar-bone with a fall, that having his skull cracked by the watch, another run through the lungs by drunken bullies ; and all this to treasure up diseases, if you should arrive to a miserable age !

Wild. Who would not be sick ten days, for one good night, with men of wit and sense ?

Bell. There's no true pleasure but in health.

Wild. What should a man do with health in damned country company, which a man ought either to be a very good philosopher, or none at all, to endure ?

Bell. What good does wit and sense do you ? Do what you can, the fops will be at the top of pleasures ; and the knaves will be at the head of all business in spite of you ; and will bear down the world, that a man, who has wit, can be good for nothing.

Wild. That makes the business of the world so foolishly done.

Enter GERTRUDE and OLDWIT'S Footman.

Gert. My father is not here.

Foot. He commanded me to bid you meet him in this room. [*She offers to retire.*

Wild. Whither goes my pretty tyrant ? Though your father be not here, here is (I am sure) one humble servant of yours.

Bell. That I am sure of, madam ; who is resolved to lay himself at your feet, there humbly to receive his doom.

Wild. What the devil does he say ? Is my best friend my rival ? I hope, madam, you are not in doubt who that servant is I spoke of ?

Bell. What's this ? Are we rivals ? This is the greatest misfortune that could have happened ! Hold ! perhaps it may be only his usual gallantry to all young women. Would you could see the wounds you make in hearts ; then, madam, mine would expect your pity

the tongue, and is very well acted. Can you do it over again!

Enter OLDWIT.

Oldw. Oh, Mr. Wildish! I have been searching, and sending for you, all over the house. What? turned flincher! 'Faith, I must have you down with me.

Wild. Here's my lord's a flincher too.

Oldw. I wink at that: I can give you some reason for that, as we go. Daughter, you know what I have said to you of this nobleman: I could not find out in all the nation such a match. Do you mind me?

Gert. Yes, sir. But by your good favour, I'll find out one for myself, for all that. [*Aside.*

Wild. 'Tis evident! What damned misfortune could have fallen out like this?

Oldw. Come, faith, Mr. Wildish, you shan't 'scape so: brimmers fly about handsomely; and we are a rare company.

Wild. I must not discover my love to this old fellow yet; I will knock him down, with two or three in a hand. [*Exit with OLDWIT.*

Gert. How I hate this kind of fooling! A woman never makes so silly a figure as when she is to look demurely and stand to be made love to. [*Aside.*

Bell. Madam, the several letters I have addressed to your ladyship's hands, and my good orator your father, though you never saw me, have let you know who I am; and then you'll guess what I have to say.

Gert. 'Tis true, my lord, I do guess, and therefore your lordship need not trouble yourself to say it; for all discourse, about that affair, runs to the same tune.

Bell. I never loved before; nor can I believe that any man loves like me.

Gert. 'Tis all alike. "Madam, your beauties! your excellent accomplishments! your extraordinary merits! Divine, &c. The lustre of your eyes! and the rest,

have in romances, and love and honour plays. Trust me, my lord, 'tis tedious.

Bell. Could I incline your gentle heart to love, then no discourse of it would seem so.

Gert. I can't tell that; but as things stand now, indeed it makes me smile, to think of a grave mother, or, for want of her, a wise father, putting a daughter into a room, like a hare out of a basket, and letting her loose; that is, to act the part of a lover before marriage, and never think of it afterwards. Then is she either to frown, be peevish, or sullen, and make no answers, or very scurvy ones; or else to blush, hold down her head, play with her fan, and tell the sticks, and say, "I have no thoughts of marriage; I am too young; 'tis time enough."

Bell. But, madam, a lady of your wit and sense knows 'tis the great end that woman is designed for; and 'tis in vain for you to speak against love; for every look, and every word of yours inflames me more.

Gert. There's a word now! Inflames, and chains, and fetters! I warrant you, one would think a man were a martyr, or a slave at Algiers at least. What conversation might men and women have, did not this foolish love interpose!

Bell. 'Tis impossible for a man to forbear thinking, or talking of love, in the presence of so beautiful, so excellent a lady.

Gert. I could expect no less: Beautiful! Excellent! &c. How silly one looks, who must stand to hear herself complimented! My lord, you are a man of honour, and I will speak plainly to you: I am resolved against love, therefore, pray deal frankly with me: disappoint the old gentleman, and let's not have one word of it betwixt us. My happiness or ruin depends upon your breath, I am too young and giddy to fix upon so solemn a business; and the pleasure I find in

Bell. Your father, madam, I hope may be a prevailing advocate.

Gert. Hope is a very thin diet, fit for love in a fever ; but to tell you true, I am apt to believe there is no such thing as love : but, if there be, I can assure you, you have gone the wrong way ; for my father is no outwork of mine : you may take him, but you are ne'er the nearer me. I am a free heiress of England, where arbitrary power is at an end, and I am resolved to choose for myself. How happily am I relieved !

Enter COUNT and Mrs. FANTAST.

Look you, my lord, here are a pair of turtles ! The French Count has gotten an absolute conquest. Let's retire, and hear the love betwixt them : they'll divert us upon that subject, better than we can ourselves.

Bell. I must obey. [*They retire and listen.*

Mrs. Fan. Now, Monsieur le Count, we are free ; we were embarrassed with company below, that we could not enjoy ourselves ; and some so ill bred, that, eh Gud, they caused such a chagrin in me !

Count. I am very appy in de occasion of kisse your hand, in secret ; indeed de Bury ladies be ver fine, ver pretty, and do me de great honeur ; buttè, madam, your lustre does outshinè dem, as de great sun does de leetle star dat twinkel, twinkel, in de sky, madam.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, monsieur, the ébat¹ of your wit will make anything appear well ; I must confess, I never have met such brilliant conversation, as from your most agreeable person.

Count. See bee de victorious ladeè ; butte, begar, see speakè de dam French for all dat. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Fan. *En veritie*, you have charmed them all ;

¹ So in first edition. I do not know whether it is a misprint for *éclat* or a sample of Mrs. Fantast's Irish-French of Bury. *Ebat* itself does not make absolute nonsense ; and perhaps suits " de

but, *mon foi*, I hate the impertinence of a numerous *assemblée*.

Count. Oh, madam, dere is no plaisir in de varle, as de retirement vid so bright a nymph ; and, madam, I must telle dat, now you have steale me out of the companee, you cannot but perceivè me, dat I have de ver great and signal passion for your ladyship ; and I have but de few littel opportunitèe to say, dat, if you takè nò compassion upon me, you breakè mine heart ; and I must killè myself vid de French bayonet, if you makè de scorn of me.

Mrs. Fan. I am not so ill bred to scorn one of the nobles.

Gert. Pray forbear, my lord ; they will come to the point presently. Would you have us play the fool thus ?

Count. If you have no scorn, de indifferance is fatal, and vill killè me too.

Mrs. Fan. *Sincèrement*, monsieur, a lady cannot have indifferance for a person so *bien fait*, and whose conversation is *ravissant*.

Gert. She comes on handsomely.

Count. Ah, madam ! I kissè your sweet 'and, for dis great *honneur* ; buttè, madam, if my ambition might aspire at your love, I vill be more appy ten tousand time, den de great monarch, madam.

Mrs. Fan. You know very well what the poet says :—

“ *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.* ”

Count. Ver well, madam, you be the most profound ladeè, and de great scholar.—*Morbleu*, she will findè me out ! Begar, I can no read. [*Aside.*

Mistress Fan. No, no *assurément*, pretty well read in the classic authors, or so. Monsieur Scudery says very well, *L'amour est une grande chose*.

Count. Hee bee ver pretty poet too.—Begar, she will puzzle me. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Fan. Poet, monsieur ! he writ romances.¹

Count. Ah, madam, in France we callè de romance, de poesie.

Bell. Oh, rogue ! that's well come off.

Mrs. Fan. And, as Monsieur Balzac says, *Songez un peu.*

Count. Dat Balzac write de ver good romance.

Mrs. Fan. Indeed ! I never heard that.

Count. *Je vous assure.*—A pox on her reading !
[*Aside.*] But, madam, let de poet, de philosoph, say vat dey vill, begar I'am so much in love vid your person, dat if you vil no be in love vid my person, begar, I must killè myself in two, tree day.

Mrs. Fan. Take time, sir, I beseech you ; we must consider on this affair.

Count. Madam, I have no time to consider ; de grand monarch, my *maitre*, wantè me for a lieutenan-general, to makè de war again Holland and Flandre, to burna de house, and to killè de man, voman, and shildè, as de great monarch does, for his glory. And I vill speakè one proud vord for myself ; he has not one officer in his armee dat burn, makè de ravagee, and killè de man, voman, and shildè, better den myself ; no indeed.

Mrs. Fan. Eh, *mon Dieu !* that is *sanglant cruelle.*

Count. Pardon mee, madam, is de discipline of war to puttè de village and de house in flamè, and vid de pistolet to shoot de voman paph in de eare vid big bellees, and de oder vid de shildè in dere arm paph paph, ver dum, ver dum, paph, paph, and to puttè de pike an alf pike into de littel suck shildè, and dey sprawl, sprawl, vid deir arm and deir leg, and make de ver pretty sight ; and take de littel boy and de garle, soe high, soe high, soe high, and stickè, and stickè de rapier into de bodee, madam.

¹ The Count, without in the least knowing it, was right and the lady wrong. But Mile. de Scudéry published her famous books

Mrs. Fan. This is very bloody.

Count. Oh, no, madam ; dey bee de enemie ; de great heros always burne and killè de man, voman, and shildè, for deir glory.

Mrs. Fan. If you heroes be so cruel, 'tis enough to fright a lady.

Count. Ah, madam, 'tis de enemie ; buttè to de mairesse, de heroes be jentle as de lamb.

Gert. This rascal must be an impostor ; I scarce believe he is a Frenchman ; though I have seen many a French coxcomb, yet I never saw a French clown before.

Bell. I will assure you, he is so ; 'tis Ned Wildish his frolic ; and 'tis fit you know it, before the business go too far. I'll tell you more.

Gert. Oh, the farther the better ; I love mischief heartily.

Mrs. Fan. If I should agree to your honourable proposal, I must love you presently.

Count. Ah, madam, 'tis for mine *honneur* ; you sall go to my *château*, my great house, for I have several, vid de great royaltee.

Enter Lady FANTAST, with several Ladies more.

Lady Fan. These ladies have entertained your, and my lord Count's absence, with some regret and chagrin, suitable to the occasion.

1st La. Ah, madam, did you design to ingross my lord Count.

2nd La. That was foul play, indeed, madam. Well, he's a fine person !

Lord BELLAMY and GERTRUDE appear.

Mrs. Fan. Quelle me ! impertinence ! Why would you bring them, madam ? I shall be a great woman ; he is captivated to the last degree ; he has ten thousand

Gert. In the air.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Fan. Oh, fie; how her pitiful English lord looks, in presence of my French Count.

1st La. Pray, my lord, do my husband the honour to dine with him to-morrow.

2nd La. If your lordship be not engaged, be pleased to honour my house at a collation this night.

3rd La. My lord, your lordship shall do my husband a great honour, to take a repast with him.

4th La. My lord Count—

Mrs. Fan. They are all amorous of him; his eye is Cupid's quiver, and his beams the darts.

Enter WILDISH.

* *Wild.* So, here's a very fair assembly!

Mrs. Fan. He's engaged to-night, ladies.

Count. Ladeè all, you do me de ver great *honneur*; I wish I could divide myself; but I am engageè to wait upon this lady, and her pretty modere.—I find she lovè mee, by dat lie she makè for me. [*Aside.*

Gert. I like your frolic admirably, for all 'tis yours.

Wild. So well acquainted, to tell secrets already!

Bell. They are very familiar; ha! 'tis most apparent.

Count. *Serviteur*, my lor; *serviteur*, Monsieur Wildish. De ladee make much of the French Count: *ma foi*, you vill see presentlee.

Enter TRIM.

Trim. I am not a little afflicted, that I have been constrained to borrow myself so long from your ladyship's most—

Mrs. Fan. Oh, fie! you smell of tobacco to a great degree.

Count. Ah, madam! take my peruke, and smellè de pulvilio; here, madam.

[*He plucks his peruke off, and gives it to her.*]

to divest himself of his chiefest ornament, to gratify my sense ! 'tis very fine !

1st La. 'Tis admirable, I swear !

2nd La. Delicate, I vow !

3rd and 4th La. Very fine !

[*The four Ladies smell it.*]

Count. Is de ver fine haire, ladee ; I have a great deal of de best in England or France in my shop.

Gert. How ? in your shop ! Do you keep shop, monsieur ? How do you sell it ?

Count. *Morbleu*, vat is dis ? Begar, I will bite my tongue.—Shop ! shop ! I no understand English. Shop ! Vat you call de place de jentilman puttè his peruke ? Oh, his cabinet, his closet.

Mrs. Fan. Now you see, Madam Gertrude ; would you have him understand English like one of us ? *Je vous remercie* ; there's your peruke again.

Trim. Sir, be pleased to read that cartel, and give me such an answer.

Enter Sir HUMPHRY NODDY.

Sir Hum. Gentlemen and ladies, I kiss all your hands.

Count. Pox take de note ; *ventre bleu*, I can no read ; but, I believe, is a shallenge. [*Aside.*]

Sir Hum. Madam, udsbud, we have drunk your health in bumpers supernaculum.†

Mrs. Fan. Oh, fie ! stand off.

Count. Hold ! de ladee no lovè de smell de tobac.

Sir Hum. Are you there, i'faith ? I hate the sight of a French dog, and I will pluck him by the nose.

Count. If I draw, dey will partè mee [*aside*]. *Morbleu*, mine honneur ! mine honneur !

Mrs. Fan. Oh, insolence ! Save the Count, save the Count !

[BELLAMY and WILDISH part them. The Ladies shriek, and run to the corner of the stage. OLDWIT staggers amongst them drunk. The women run out shrieking; with them, exeunt TRIM, Sir HUMPHRY, BELLAMY.

Oldwit [sings].

“There were three men came out of the west,
To make saltpetre strong,” &c.

Where are my drunkards? Where are my drunkards?
You finchers! You sober sots! Where is my Jezebel,
my cockatrice, my clogdogdo? as honest Tom Otter
says. A senseless jade, with her wit and her breeding!
She steals away my drunkards. Old spouse, mummy;
thou that wrap'st thyself every night in cere-cloths!

[The Servants come in and hold him.

Count. Consider I did killè de Count, and have de
blood upon me. Vell, monsieur, you vill takè de care
o' de business. *Morbleu!* pox takè de note, me can no
read, me can no fight; vat me can do vid de shallenge?

[Aside.

Wild. You have done rarely; let me alone. I'll pro-
tect you! but let's fly the fury of this drunkard.

[Exit with the COUNT.

Oldw. Where is my goad, my damned for better for
worse? She has stolen my drunkards and my wits from
me. Where are my drunkards? Rogues, let me go to
my drunkards and my wits, you rogues.

“There were three men came out of the west,
To make saltpetre strong;
To turn it into gunpowder,
For to charge the king's cannon.”

[The Servants hale him out.



ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

Enter WILDISH and TRIM.



WILD. I am the Count's friend, but he will not engage me. He says he always kills, for he never gives quarter, and he will not be the occasion of my leaving my country. He must into France; he is a great officer. He has laid horses, and will be ready to escape.

Trim. Is he so inveterate an enemy?

Wild. Yes, and fences like a provost: he throws in his passes quick as lightning, and hits what button he pleases.

Trim. Then, if I reap the honour of the field, my laurel will be greater. At the east end of the biggest church, you say, a quarter of an hour hence; I will not fail. I kiss your hands, sir. However, the unfortunate arrival of this Count, who has prodigiously insinuated himself into my mistress's affections, may have ruffled and disordered the wonted serenity of my temper; yet in all occasions that may occur, I assure you, sir, you shall ever find me rational and civil. Your humble servant: the time fleets quick away, and honour calls.

[*Exit.*

Wild. This formal coxcomb, I find, is stout; and the Count will find some trouble in him. But 'twill advance

the farce to have the ladies, who are stark mad after him, see or hear he's soundly cudgelled.

Enter Sir HUMPHRY.

Sir Humphry, if you make not haste, the Count will be before you; he'll wait alone, at the east end of the great church.

Sir Hum. A pox on him! Does he fence so devilishly, and never give quarter? Bloody rogue! But what care I? I make no more account of this Count than of a jackanapes.

Wild. Never without a conceit?

Sir Hum. Take me without a jest! But I'll be gone, and make the French Count dance a minuet. Your servant. *[Exit.*

Enter Valet.

Wild. This fellow may be a coward, by his vapouring. Have you found the Count?

Val. Yes, sir; very melancholy at your lodging, where he has told me the secrets of his heart. He bewailed this unlucky quarrel, which he apprehends so much, that were he not sure, as he says, of the love of Mrs. Fantast, he would leave his Countship, and run from Bury immediately. But he is now coming hither.

Wild. Well, go about your business, and say nothing yet. *[Exit Valet.*

Enter COUNT.

Count. Vell, monsieur, vat is become of dis business with Monsieur Jean Trim?

Wild. I told him I was your friend, and I have appointed him a place to meet you in.

Count. Begar, I vill no meet.

Wild. I have passed my honour, you shall be there.

Count. *Morbleu*, I vill no be dere. Jerny, I vill tellè you de secret. Dis fine ladee, Maitresse Fantast, is in lovè vid me. *Ventre bleu* I vill no fight: if I do, I am

dis dam rogue runnè me trough de bodee, me losè de maitresse.

Wild. How, you rogue? Lose her! You shall never have her. As great an aversion as I have to her, the frolic shall not go so far.

Count. *Ma foi*, you be mistakè; de frolic shall go more far; yes, indeed. [*Aside.*] I villa no killè de rogue, or be hanga for de rascal.

Wild. Don't trouble yourself. I have given him that character of you, that he trembles at you; he'll never dare come. But we must be there, for our honour's sake.

Count. Is de [he?] coward indeed? [*Aside.*] Eh, *morbleu*, monsieur, me fear no person dat veer de head; but in dis case is no prudence.

Wild. I have met Sir Humphry, and I have challenged him to fight with you, for the tweak he gave you by the nose; and told him I would be your second.

Count. Jerny, vat is dis? Begar, I vill no killè two. I vill no meet dat dam rogue, *ma foi*.

Wild. I have appointed him; you must be there. I believe he is a poltroon; but you will be cudgelled by all the men, and scorned by all the women, if you take the tweak by the nose. Come along with me, I'll tell you more.

Count. Is better to takè de cudgel upon de shouldre two, tree, four time, den to have de rapier trough de bodee one time: yes, a great deal better.

Wild. Allons, here's company coming.

[*Exeunt WILDISH and COUNT.*]

Enter CHARLES.

Cha. There goes the rival to my lord. Oh, may he prosper in his suit, and cure my lord of his short fever! I am sure he can never be so mean to love one who shall love another. But here he comes.

Enter Lord BELLAMY.

Bell. Not all the ill-fortune I have ever met can equal

friend, so much a man of honour, should be my rival! I cannot blame him for it either; he has broken no trust, and any man that looks upon her must be subdued, as I am. But my hope is yet, she is unapt to love.—Oh, Charles, didst thou see Ned Wildish this evening?

Cha. Yes, my lord; even now he went into the Abbey yard.

Bell. But what says my mistress to the present, and the letter which I sent?

Cha. She was not at home. Here is your golden box full of jewels; it is the finest present I ever saw made to a lady. My lord, I beseech your lordship, let one of your gentlemen carry 'em.

Bell. Is my service then become irksome to you?

Cha. Oh no, my lord; pray frown not; I'll plunge into the deep, I'll run into the fire, to do you service. Pray be not angry.

Bell. I cannot tell what 'tis should move thee to it; but thou art still averse to the proceeding of my love.

Cha. I love you more than ever servant loved a lord: and 'tis my fear for you. My cousin in Northamptonshire is of kin to her, your lordship knows; and I once heard her say, she had too great a spirit for a wife.

Bell. She has all the beauty and wit of her whole sex in her; and none of all their vanities. Didst thou not observe?

Cha. I did, my lord, that which your lordship did not.

Bell. Ha! What was that?

Cha. My lord, I fear I shall offend.

Bell. Yes, if you tell me not.

Cha. Did you not perceive she made a difference in her looks, and entertained not every man with equal sweetness?

Bell. He stings me to the heart! [*Aside.*] Explain your meaning.

gentleman, whom she beholds with greater favour, than what seems indifferent.

Bell. It is her gaiety of temper ; you are too jealous.

Cha. It is for you, my lord : pray pardon me. Alas ! what interest can I have, but yours ? I should be loth to be officious.

Bell. What means the youth ? sure, young as he is, he is in love with her ; and love will nourish even the highest ambition : for why should he be so concerned ? Where is the letter, which I ordered you to give my mistress with the present ?

Cha. It's here, my lord. [*Gives him a note.*] Sure, this will convince him.

Bell. Ha ! What do I see ? 'Tis Wildish's hand ! "To the fair hands of——" How came you by this note ?

Cha. My lord, the note ? Ha ! 'Twas my mistake. I did, at the beginning of my discourse, intend to show it to your lordship ; but found you would be too much moved. It dropped from Mrs. Gertrude, after dinner, and I took it up.

Bell. Why did you not restore it ?

Cha. I, knowing the hand, thought I might do your lordship service in showing it to you. Will you not read it ?

Bell. Did you ?

Cha. Oh yes, my lord, knowing your lordship was so highly concerned ; and found it so familiar——

Bell. It was impertinent.

Cha. My lord !

Bell. It was not honest.

Cha. My lord, my noble lord, pray pardon my misguided zeal for you : impute it to my youth, my small experience, my mistake of honour. Forgive me, or my knees shall grow to the earth.

Bell. Rise and learn better ; to open others' letters is mean, and dishonourable.

You are a man of strictest honour! How shall I expiate my fault, and gain your pardon?

Bell. I pardon you, and will impute it to your want of knowledge; and to make atonement for it, you shall return it to her, and make her what excuse you can. Go instantly, and find her, and give me the present, with my letter. [*Exit.*

Cha. Into how sad and how perplexed a case has my too headstrong passion brought me, which every day increases, while my hopes grow less? What prospect have I now, or glimpse of comfort? She in a little time, must love as I do. What shall I say to her? She will discover me: she said, she never saw one yet so like her sister, but for the colour of my hair; I overheard her. What shall I do? Hold. If this jealousy should make him fight with Wildish, I am lost! I'll follow him; for, sure, I shall be valiant in his cause. Oh, wicked rashness! [*Exit.*

WILDISH and COUNT in the Abbey yard.

Wild. 'Tis a fine moonlight night: these fellows are poltroons, and dare not come.

Count. 'Tis de grand pity dat de coward should be suffer to live indeed; me vould hang de coward. Begar, is time to go.

Wild. We must stay a little: if they come, I'll run Sir Humphry through the lungs, while you whip the other through.

Count. Jerny, vat, stay for de coward? Begar, I scorn to stay for de coward: ver well indeed, de man of courage stay for de coward! is no raison for dat.

Wild. I see two coming towards us; they are the two.

Enter BELLAMY and CHARLES.

Count. Pox takè him, he does lovè de tilt: *ma foi*, is all one for dat; begar, I vill no meet dem: dey have

puttè de affronte upon dem, an leave dem now dey be come. *[Walks hastily away.]*

Wild. Monsieur le Count, come back. What, will you leave me to two?

Count. Hum, hum, hum; me vill no come back.

[WILDISH overtakes him and lays hold on him.]

Bell. Mr. Wildish.

Wild. My lord.

Count. Oh, begar, is my lor; de coward vill no come.

Bell. I have somewhat to say to you, which concerns me nearly.

Wild. My lord, I lately have perceived something of you, that lies heavy at my heart.

Bell. I never yet met with misfortune which could equal this.

Wild. I know too well your meaning. I never yet had any cross, which I with ease could not have borne before.

Bell. We have been friends.

Wild. Long friends, and true.

Bell. I think so.

Wild. How, my lord, do you but think so?

Bell. I never, 'till this day, had the least doubt. What pleasant conversation, what endearments, what mutual kindnesses, have passed betwixt us!

Wild. And are you weary of my friendship, that you resolve to break with me, by doubting it? How have I loved you present? with what regret have I sustained your absence? How often have we ventured our lives for one another's honour? And am I changed, my lord?

Bell. Oh yes, friend, we are both changed; I have a mistress now, so charming, it is impossible that I should live without her.

Wild. I have a mistress too, so much above her sex, so fair, so witty, so engaging, that I must enjoy her, or

Bell. How? Enjoy her! Take heed, friend.

Wild. I mean all honour to her.

Bell. Would you possess the mistress of your friend?

Wild. Would you possess the mistress of your friend?

Bell. How, sir? do you echo me?

Wild. The case, my lord, is so. Once, there was nothing in the world so dear to me as you; but, since I knew my mistress, I would quit all that is precious in the world, ere I would lose her.

Bell. What do I hear! Sir, have you then possession of her.

Wild. A sanguine man is never out of hope; I have her in imagination now, methinks.

Bell. Methinks, you go too fast, sir; you know my temper, sir; how long do you think that I can bear a rival?

Wild. I can consider nothing but her, and her, and only her.

Bell. You slight me, sir.

Wild. I hope, I have more manners.

Cha. Oh, how I tremble! They will fight, and I am lost for ever!

Count. Dey seem in de passion. If dey two be mad, as to makè de duel, dey vill takè me for de second, against dat little jentilman, de page; and I have seen de page in France fence like de diable: he vill putte his rapier in my bodee; me vill steal away. [*Steals out.*]

Bell. I am agreed upon articles with her father, who is her guardian.

Wild. And I am endeavouring to agree upon articles with her; which is a shorter way.

Bell. But 'tis not so fair a way.

Wild. How, not so fair?

Bell. No; nor can any man enjoy her while I live.

Wild. 'Sdeath! What do you say? Defend yourself.

Bell. I am always ready to do that.

Cha. Help! help! Murder! murder! Help! help!

Bell. Hold, sir; hold! You want a sword; pray make use of mine.

Wild. You are generous, my lord; my life's yours, and so it was before, and whatsoever I could call mine was so, except my mistress.

Bell. Let us be still such friends: there's not a man on earth I value equal with you.

Enter CHARLES.

Cha. They are embracing! Blessed Heaven! I hope my lord's not hurt.

Bell. What remains then, but we proceed like men of reason; each take his way to gain the divine creature's love? And since one must be for ever miserable, let her be arbitress of our two fates.

Wild. You still possess the same honour which you ever had; I am now your most unhappy, but most faithful friend. [*They embrace.*]

Enter the COUNT.

Count. Is de fight done? Oh, dey embrace; is no dangere.

Wild. You most impudent cowardly dog! If you had not run away, you might have parted us, and not have suffered friends to fight. [*Kicks him.*]

Count. Hold, hold, hold! is ver well, you kickè de French Count! Begar, you show de breeding; kickè de Count! you takè me for de barbier; ver fine, yes indeed.

Wild. Sirrah, you shall be Count no longer: this frolic shall not turn to earnest.

Count. I vill be gone, an gettè de ladee, for all dat. Adieu. Jerny, me vill no stay to be kickè.

Wild. My lord, I must take off this rogue; my honour may be questioned. For, though I hate the affected creature, I would not have this go on to a

Bell. You have reason! by what I overheard, 'twill come to one of them, if you prevent 'em not.

[*Exit WILDISH.*

Come Charles, come along with me; this evening all the company will be in the Fair, and there I must meet my mistress.

Cha. What deadly sound is this! on every side I am lost!

[*Exeunt.*

TRIM in the churchyard; and *Sir HUMPHRY* standing under a pillar of the church.

Trim. I could not have imagined that this French Count should be so devoid of breeding, and the decencies which become all gentlemen, as to make me wait so long, upon so important an occasion.

Sir Hum. This damned French Count will stay here for ever, I think: a pox on him for a bloodthirsty rascal! But I will outstay him, and face him down, that I wait here for him; and there may be hopes it may be taken up. Gad take me, he's a murderous rogue, and I will not fight! I durst have sworn he had been a coward.

Trim. Will he never appear.

Enter Lady FANTAST, Mrs. FANTAST, and two Men Servants.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, madam, I am ruined, if my dear Count should fight! my passion is extreme, as is his for me.

Lady Fan. I cannot blame thee, daughter: he is the most charming person, that ever my eyes beheld!

Mrs. Fan. Oh, madam, should he fall, I never can survive him! *Hélas, mon pauvre cœur!*

Lady Fan. Sir Humphry was seen to come into the churchyard.

Trim. Here is company; I must retire.

Sir Hum. Ounds the rogue will find me out! He

Trim. Ha ! who's this ?

Sir Hum. Oh pox ! is it he ? Jack, Jack, little Jack, nown Jack, my lad !

Trim. Jack ! Jack ! Jack ! Sir, you are too familiar, and by your apish gesticulations have endeavoured to expose my person on all occasions ; for which, now we are opportunely met, I will chastise you, as becomes a gentleman.

Sir Hum. Why Jack ! nown Jack ! What, art thou mad ? Prithee kiss me.

Trim. I will salute you in another manner.

[*Strikes him with his sword.*]

Sir Hum. Why Jack ! prithee leave fooling.

Trim. Draw, or I will sacrifice you to my just revenge, this very individual moment. Have at you.

Sir Hum. Hold, hold ! this rogue will kill me.

[*He draws, TRIM pushes at him, and his sword falls ; Sir HUMPHRY takes it up.*]

Mrs. Fan. Oh Heaven ! there they are fighting ! Run, run, and save the Count ! Oh save the——

[*She runs and Lady FANTAST after her.*]

Lady Fan. Oh, save the Count ! save the Count !

Sir Hum. Take your life ; I give you your life ; and learn how you provoke me another time.

Mrs. Fan. Pish ! are these two here ?

Sir Hum. Take notice, I give him his life.

Mrs. Fan. Is this all ? Madam, let's go.

Lady Fan. Come on. [*Exeunt hastily.*]

Trim. Sir, you have good fortune only, but no valour, to boast of.

Sir Hum. Sir, I have disarmed you, and there's an end on't.

Trim. You will return my rapier, as becomes a gentleman ?

Sir Hum. Gad take me, not I, till you come into the Fair ; for aught I know, a whim may take you to fight

Trim. Sure, I have a greater share of honour, and a greater stock of breeding, than to commit such an error against you, whom fortune has presented with that advantage.

Sir Hum. Udsbud, I'll not trust you: follow me. But I am resolved to cudgel this damnable Count for a coward.

Trim. And I likewise; and surely cudgels will render him obnoxious to the hate and scorn of Madam Fantast.

Sir Hum. I'll lay him on. Come, follow me. [*Exit.*

Trim. That persons should frequent Bury, and suck in no breeding, is, I must confess, prodigious! [*Exit.*



SCENE II.—*The Fair. They Cry their Several Wares.*

Enter WILDISH: to him the COUNT.

Wild. Where is this damned Count? Oh, here. Do you hear, sirrah? I am told you have succeeded so far with this fantastic foolish creature, that she will marry you.

Count. Den, begar, I have make de French Count ver vel.

Wild. If you make any further application, I will cut your throat. But, in the first place, I will un-Count you, and cut off your train, sir.

Count. Vel, vel, vat you please: *ma foi*, she loves me ver vel. Sall I makè de fornication vid her? begar, I vil no marry, upon my honneur.

Wild. I had rather you should do that, than marry her; but I will have no more love to her: and then carry on your Countship as much as you will; you may have your choice of others. But be sure to use the cowards scurvily.

Count. I warrant you, I vil beatè dem.

Count. Jerny, he cuttè my troat ! Begar, me makè de great laugh at dat : he no dare be hanga ; me vil havè de ladeè for all dis ; me know de law.

Enter four Ladies.

1st La. Oh, Monsieur le Count, *serviteur* !

2nd La. Monsieur, your humble servant.

3rd La. Monsieur, I am yours, I assure you.

4th La. Oh, my lord, we thought the Fair had lost you.

Count. Madam, me kisse all your hande : me would be two, tree, four Count for your saka ; begar, me vil makè two, tree, four cuckold, and marry de ladeè too.

[He walks forward, with two on each hand.]

Enter GERTRUDE.

Wild. Oh, my most cruel mistress !

Gert. Oh, my most ungracious servant ; can I come nowhere, but you must cross me with your unlucky countenance ?

Wild. You can come nowhere, but I will endeavour to bless myself with the sight of yours, or I must die.

Gert. Oh, that it were in my power to make a lover hang himself ! then I would triumph for the rest of my poor deluded sex. They talk of being martyrs, and dying, and dying, and such stuff ; but would I could see one of 'em die once : that would be worth the seeing.

Wild. My pretty charming tyrant, sure you are not so bloody-minded !

Gert. Well, I am of opinion, that a lady is no more to be accounted a beauty, till she has killed her man, than the bullies think one a fine gentleman, till he has killed his.

Wild. I must beg leave to be a little more serious with you.

Gert. Never : why, you'll come to th

tolerable ; but serious love is duller than a rhyming play.

Wild. My case is now more desperate than I thought : I have discovered, that my greatest friend, a man of worth and honour, is my rival.

Gert. Ne'er the more desperate for that ; 'twas full as desperate before : but, if you be a true friend to him, give over troubling me.

Wild. How ! have you then made choice of him ?

Gert. Of neither : but, if I can be once rid of you, he is somewhat modester, and I doubt not but to shake him off. Here he comes.

Enter Lord BELLAMY.

Wild. These free-spirited ladies are hard to be subdued : a man may get ten modest, meek, and shame-faced ladies, ere he can conquer one of these ; they have not the heart to deny.

Gert. My lord, I beseech your lordship, no love in the Fair.

Bell. How hard is my condition, who have so cruel a mistress, and so deserving a rival ! and, which is most unfortunate, my greatest friend too !

Wild. In the first part of my character, you do me too much honour ; but in the latter, you are just.

Gert. So ; here's a fine subject for a love and honour-poet ! But you are in no danger of him ; for I am resolved to keep myself free, and incline to none : methinks 'tis air I tread ! how light I am without a yoke !

Enter OLDWIT.

Oldw. Oh, my little Gatty ! Ha ! my lord ! here's flesh and blood for you ! will she not make a rare bedfellow.

Gert. Fie, sir, what do you mean ? Farewell.

[*She walks out.*]

sir. I have had company with me ; and we have had such a discourse about wit : they, of the new wit ; and I, of the old wit, and my own things I writ in the last age.

Wild. Well, and you run 'em down, I make no doubt.

Enter Lady FANTAST and Mrs. FANTAST.

Lady Fan. Servant, ladies.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, Monsieur le Count, I am overjoyed to see you safe !

Count. Safe, madam ! Begar, 'Trim and Sir Noddy be de two great coward indeed, and me beata dem like two dogua ; yes, *fait*.

Mrs. Fan. If your pretended passion have reality, follow me to our house : you are in danger for my sake, and I will stick to you with my life and fortune. Come instantly ; there are spies upon us. Madam, come away.

Lady Fan. I come, dear child.

[Exeunt Lady FANTAST and Mrs. FANTAST.]

Count. Poor rogua ! she love me *extrêmement* ! Begar, Monsieur Wildish is an ass, and me vil have de ladeè for all him. *[Aside.]*

Oldw. What ? a French barber and peruke-maker, and no Count ! Hang him, he would not drink. I thought there was no good in him.

Wild. I am to beg a thousand pardons of you : 'twas my frolic, but 'tis gone too far ; for, if you don't prevent it, he may marry Mrs. Fantast.

Oldw. Nay, 'faith, 'tis no great matter if he does. Would he could marry the mother too ; for, under the rose, never man was so plagued with a couple of impertinent, fantastic jades, as I am with them. And to complete the affliction, they must pretend to wit before me, and will allow me to have none !

Wild. That indeed is most unsufferable.

Oldw. Ay, is't not ?

[The COUNT is very busy talking with the four Ladies ;

Enter TRIM.

Wild. Now is your time, Count, to put an affront upon that coward.

Count. Lettè me alone for that.—Begar, I am amaze dat de coward dare show his face anywhere. Begar, I vill pluckè you by de nose, because you no dare meet a me.

Trim. And I will make that return which becometh a man of honour to do in like cases.

[He cudgels him. The Ladies shriek, and run away.]

Count. Jerny, vat is dis? vat you do? You canè de Count! Begar, you show de breeding. Hold, hold! vat you do? Monsieur Vildish, my lord, stand by me.

[He draws, and TRIM lays him on. He runs away, and meets Sir HUMPHRY on the other side of the stage, who cudgels him too. He runs backward and forward, and is cudgelled on both sides. The Constable with a guard enters, and knocks TRIM and Sir HUMPHRY down, and the COUNT escapes.]

Sir Hum. Are you there, you coward?

Count. Eh, morbleu! vat is dis?

Bell. Now it works.

Oldw. Passing good, i'faith! Come let's to my house.

[Exeunt WILDISH, OLDWIT, and BELLAMY.]

Const. Come, gentlemen, you shall go before the Alderman: he'll teach you to make a disturbance in the Fair.

Trim. Sweet Mr. Constable! Sir, sir, Mr. Constable! Mr. Constable!

Const. Away with 'em, I say.

[They hale them out. Exeunt.]





ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*Enter* OLDWIT and Mistress GERTRUDE.



OLDW. I shall have nothing but uproars and quarrels in my family. Trim and Sir Humphry have quarrelled with the Count about Madam Fantast, with a pox to her; and even now my Lord Bellamy and Mr. Wildish have fought about you, as the Page said, and I heard it.

Gert. How? Fought about me!

Oldw. So I say; I shall have my foolish family the whole discourse of this tittle-tattle town. Look you daughter, I knew not of Mr. Wildish's love to you; they have both very good estates: but Mr. Wildish is a wit, a great wit, i'faith. I leave you to your choice.

Gert. I thank you, sir: then I choose neither of 'em, nor any other.

Oldw. Thou art so wild, and such a skittish filly, you must be tamed and married. Come, come, determine your choice suddenly, which they have past their honours shall determine them; or battle and murder may ensue about you.

Gert. I am not so vain to believe that.

Oldw. Be not so foolish to believe otherwise. Look you, they are coming in, and you are to sit upon life and death: be an upright judge, and do not delay justice; I must have an end of this suit presently. Farewell.

Gert. A very grave judge shall I be, without doubt ! But I think the petticoat may vie for wisdom and sincerity with the long robe, before our late restoration.

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. Madam, this letter, which fell from your ladyship accidentally, came into my lord's hands ; and he commanded me to deliver it to you, unread, and unopened, though he knew the hand. [*Exit.*

Gert. How ? my note fallen into his hands ! How unlucky was this ! Ha, gone ! How strangely this youth resembles my sister Philadelphia ! This is handsomely done of my lord, and like a man of honour.

Enter Lord BELLAMY, and WILDISH : CHARLES steals in after them.

Wild. Madam, behold a pair of rivals, hand in hand, and friends.

Bell. Who come to prostrate themselves at your feet, and must from your fair mouth expect their doom.

Charles. Oh, she will choose my lord, and I must perish ! [*Aside.*

Wild. To whom ever you shall give leave to continue your servant, the other will quietly retire, and suffer his hard fate with all the patience that he can. But if I am rejected, I shall be for ever miserable.

Bell. And to me, Heaven knows, not all the world besides can recompense the loss of you.

Charles. Ah me ! [*Aside.*

Gert. Are you resolved to be in earnest, and would you make me so ? I have not yet determined to marry any one.

Wild. Must we then both sue on, and try by constant service to obtain your heart ?

Gert. No, no : you will oblige me more if you will both desist. I have that joy in freedom, that I cannot

Bell. You are born in command, and always must be free.

Wild. I love so, madam, I must be your slave for ever.

Gert. Yes, if you love, so long I may keep you at my command: but this same whoreson marriage kills all love, and makes best friends fall out.

Bell. Nothing can ever make my love decrease.

Gert. Yes, if I love again: as fire takes out fire.

Wild. Not all your cruelty can tame my love: which if it be so raging now, what would your kindness make it?

Gert. Oh, marriage is a sovereign julep: and thirst grows less apace by drinking.

Bell. Not where 'tis a distemper, a violent fever, as all love is, sure.

Gert. Too violent to last.

Wild. Madam, in short, if you do not determine which of us shall have leave to sue, implicitly you give it both of us.

Gert. Is that your logic, sir? No; in the first place I never will give you leave to make the least address to me more.

Charles. Oh, I am lost!

[*Swoons, and falls down upon a chair.*]

Bell. What's the matter?

Gert. Your page is in a swoon. Help, help! Open his breast. Oh Heaven! this is a woman!

Bell. and Wild. A woman!

Gert. She comes to herself.

Charles. Oh, madam, I am your sister: for Heaven's sake conceal me! [In whisper.]

Gert. Run up privately into my chamber quickly. I am amazed! This is prodigious!

Bell. A woman! Madam, I was never so surprised.

Gert. No doubt, you are surprised; and so was she.

Bell. Accursed misfortune ! I am undone for ever ! I'll hasten and have a full account of all this matter.

[*Exit hastily.*

Gert. [*Aside.*] I hope he knew her not. My sister !— This is an admirable lover ! Let my wise father keep him to himself, I have done with him.

Wild. Will you be pleased then to begin with me ? I am the truest lover of my sex.

Gert. If you are, I'll keep you so : for, should I think of marrying you, I give up my dominion. No, no ; I will domineer seven years first.

Wild. 'Sdeath, madam ! seven years ! What, do you take me for a patriarch ? serve seven years ! They might stay, who begun at fourscore to get sons and daughters : but I have but a short time to live.

Gert. I am sure, if I should marry you, I should have but a short time to reign.

Wild. Consider, madam.

Gert. I have considered. Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Enter COUNT and Mrs. FANTAST.

Mrs. Fan. How glad I am, to see you safe ! Your life is beset, for my sake ; and I am bound in honour to protect it.

Count. Madam, you havè de great share of honneur, and de great share of de beauteè ; but for de rival, I vil beat and killè dem all.

Mrs. Fan. They are a greater number, monsieur, than you imagine.

Count. Begar, all dat look upon you are de rival ; butte dey dat makè love, I vill makè de example : I had killè two of dem just now, but de Fair all rise upon me, and make me makè de retreat.

Mrs. Fan. Heaven grant you be not *blessée*, monsieur.

Count. Me have no wound, madam, but yat you givè

despisè ; me vill runnè dem trough de bodee dus, in quart, second, tierce ; ha, ha, ha ! [*He thrusts with his drawn sword.*] Butte you can no savè my life, if you no lovè my person, and marry vid my person.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, *je suis rouge*, you make me blush : I fear, you have *découverté* more of my *tendresse* than I would have had you.

Count. Madamma, if you vill makè me your husband, you stoppe all de insolance of de rival, and makè me appy beyond de varle : else, me vill be bound in honneur to killè two, tree rival every day, every day, madam, and dat vill be bloody varke ; but is all one for dat, if you no marry vid me, me am desperate.

Mrs. Fan. Though I must confess I never met such charms in any person, yet I should be censured for being too precipitous, in agreeing so soon to your honourable proposals.

Count. Vee vil go into France, beyond de censure, to de great chateau of min, as big as Amptong Cour, vid de great canaille, de great park, and de grand royalty, vid two, tree grand chateau beside ; buttè it must be sodain ; for de Grand Monarque expectè me.

Enter Lady FANTAST.

Lady Fan. Come, daughter, I have been acquainted before with my lord Count's honourable passion towards you ; and he is a person of undoubted excellence : you have full ten thousand pounds ; and I shall think your fortune and your person well bestowed upon a noble gentleman of such grand Merit.

Count. Oh, faire madamma, you do me de great honneur : me no care for de moneè, it is de person ; dis hope makè me all on flamè. Madam, gettè de parson, de minister, to dispatchè de business presantleè.

Lady Fan. Sir, it is night ; 'tis not the canonical hour.

Count. Is all one : de good Roman Catolique priest

Mrs. Fan. No, by no means; not till to-morrow, madam.

Count. Breakè de gold, and makè de contract den now: dat vill breakè de heart of all the rival, and makè dem sneakè, likè de pitful rogua! Begar.

Lady Fan. Let it be so, daughter: if by any accident you should lose the Count, we were undone.

Mrs. Fan. *Ou sans doubt*, I should be most miserable.

Enter LUCE, and Page to the COUNT.

Lady Fan. Oh, Luce, you are come in season.

Luce. Mylord Count, your page is here to speak with you.

Count. Let him come in. Hey, page. Let all be witness of de contract: me vill be no fourb, no fripon. Upon de knee me swearè to marry dis ladeè, Madam Fantast, to-morrow in de morning. [*He kneels.*]

Lady Fan. Daughter, you must promise. Come, never be ashamed of so transcendent a choice.

Mrs. Fan. I am obedient: I swear to marry this noble person, *Mounsieur le Count de Cheveux*, to-morrow morning. [*She kneels.*]

Count. Ah, madamma, now breakè de gold, de broad-piece: so, is done; and now, rise up, ma chère Countess.

Mrs. Fan. *Eh, mon cher Count!*

Lady Fan. Millions of joys fall on you both! I weep for joy.

Nich. Master, they have got the report now all over the town, that you are a barber and peruke-maker; your equipage is revolted. Mr. Wildish's men talk it everywhere, and my Lord Bellamy's men; and 'tis in everybody's mouth.

Count. Begar, dey be de rogua, de scoundrella: but begon from dis house, and be seen no more here; and say, you can no findè me. [*Exit* Page.]

Mrs. Fan. Somebody's coming up; a rival, I believe; pray, go into my closet.

Count. Vere, vere is de closet? Begar, I vould killè de rival before your face, but is not decent, madam.

Mrs. Fan. Madam, I beseech you, entertain 'em, while I retire with *mon cher Count*.

[*They retire into the closet, where they peep out to listen.*]

Enter TRIM.

Trim. Madam, I kiss your ladyship's fair hands.

Lady Fan. Your servant, sweet Mr. Trim.

Trim. Could I think to have lived to have seen this inauspicious day, who had so long admired the beauty, and adored the mind of my divine Dorinda? That I, having devoted not only my heart, but all the actions of my life to her service, should be thus sacrificed to a Frenchman!

Lady Fan. 'Tis a most fatal mistake: she bears a most profound respect towards the worthy Mr. Trim.

Trim. At his first approach her sad indifference appeared in the bud, which since has sprouted up to complete scorn; and all for this Frenchman, this false Count, this impostor!

Lady Fan. How? False Count!

Count. Lettè me go! Begar, I vill runnè him trough de bodee.

Mrs. Fan. You shall not stir.

Trim. Yes; he is a false Count, and a true barber and peruke-maker.

Count. Jerny, dam rogua, makè de great lie of me! Lettè me go, madamma; me vill killè de rogua, for dis affront.

Mrs. Fan. I will not part with you out of my arms.

Lady Fan. Sir, be not so temerarious: he is one of the noblesse, and his nature's vindicative in honour's cause.

Trim. Háng him, snip-snap rogue, I contemn him; I challenged him: he is a coward, and durst not answer my cartel to meet me: for which I exercised him plenti-

Count. O de dam lie rogua ! Begar, me must killè him, for mine honneur. *Morbleu*, madamma, me did beata dis rascal, like de spaniel dogue, indeed.

Mrs. Fan. Let him lie on : I'll revenge it.

Lady Fan. You must pardon me, sir, if I give not credit to, what you say : I am assured he's as brave a gentleman as e'er drew sword, and a great commander.

Trim. I do aver, that he's a barber in Piccadilly.

Lady Fan. Ha, ha, ha ! that's a jest ! My daughter and I mistake in breeding and quality !

Enter Sir HUMPHRY.

Sir Hum. Oh, madam, I am come to vent my just resentments, for the slight your daughter has put upon me for this damned rascally Count, whom I tweaked by the nose, last night. I challenged him ; he dared not meet me ; but, by cross-biting, made Jack here, little Jack and me meet, and fall out ; and you saw me give him his life.

Trim. If you hold your own at any rate, boast not once more : if you persist you will awaken my fury 'till it may destroy you.

Sir Hum. Prithee, Jack, hold thy peace ; thou art the peevishest fellow ! But after all this Count of yours is a rogue, a cheat ; he's a barber in Piccadilly.

Lady Fan. Ha, ha, ha ! as if my daughter and I could take a barber for a Count ! Ha, ha, ha !

Sir Hum. Udsbud, this fellow's a barber : I can prove it upon him.

Count. Oh, madamma, me beg upon de knee dat you vill lettè me but killè dese two, and me vill killè no more, upon mine honneur. De devil can no makè de lie so.

Sir Hum. Nay, Gad take me, I don't much care ; I have a good estate, and I shall have women enough court me, where I need not apprehend a French Count,

in the Fair, Jack, ha! that he will not be very active a while.

Count. Ah, madam, dey provokè me beyondè de patiance.

Mrs Fan. Go in, I say; and let me alone with them. [*She locks him in.*] I have overheard you, and wonder much you dare calumniate a person of such breeding, quality, and honour as the Count! Your lives were not worth a farthing if he heard you. Is this like gentlemen?

Sir Hum. Honour! hang him, scoundrel! Gad take me, I cudgelled him, 'till my arm aches; a damned cowardly barber and peruke-maker!

Trim. And I chastised him in like manner most exorbitantly.

Mrs. Fan. You are insolent thus to traduce a person of his worth.

Lady Fan. Call you this breeding; to challenge and abuse a person of quality in my house for his gallantry to my daughter?

Mrs. Fan. How dare you commit the insolence, to challenge a person whom I favour? and then to blacken his unspotted fame, when I know you dare not meet him, and he cudgelled you.

Trim. Admired Dorinda, the faculties of whose noble soul did use to shine more bright, than to be led into so gross an error as to mistake a barber for a Count——

Mrs. Fan. Ha, ha, ha! my lady and I mistake breeding and quality, and take a barber for a nobleman! *Mon Dieu!* this is malice, mere envy of my favours.

Lady Fan. If my daughter and I can mistake in such material points, who can be judges?

Sir Hum. Nay, for my part, madam, if you must love a cudgelled barber, and take him for a valiant Count, make much of him; I shall desist. There are more ladies. Heaven be thanked.

affirms that my fair Dorinda has an equal I thus fling down my glove and do demand the combat for her honour. This is a nice point of honour I have hit.

[*Aside.*

Sir Hum. Why, Jack, Jack, nown Jack! what, art thou mad? Jack, Jack!

Trim. Prithee Jack me no Jacks; but speak with honour of my mistress, or draw.

Lady Fan. What, more quarrels in my house!

Sir Hum. Prithee, Jack; why, I gave thee thy life, man. What a devil! if you be so peevish fare you well. Ladies, your humble servant: and a pox of all cowardly French peruke-makers, I say. [Exit.

Mrs. Fan. *Quelle insolence!* I will not hear his honour lessened so.

Trim. 'Tis an undoubted verity, most inevitably true, that he is a barber, madam.

Mrs. Fan. 'Tis false; 'tis the basest malice to blacken men in absence; he is a person in whom all charms are met.

Trim. He charms! Alas, Dorinda, whither do you stray?

Mrs. Fan. Begone; avoid my presence.

Trim. Can my Dorinda—

Mrs. Fan. I say, begone.

Trim. Will you not hear?

Mrs. Fan. No.

Trim. I obey: I say no more at present. [Exit.

Mrs. Fan. Monsieur, my dear Count, come forth.

Count. Ah, madame ma chère, mine honeur! de barbièr! de peruke-man! *Morbleu!* vy do dey no callè me de tinkre, de jugler, vat dey vill? If you please lettè me killè dese two rogua, you vill obligè me ver mush indeed, my dear Countess.

Mrs. Fan. Would you kill me by bringing yourself

Hi sunt de pace triumphi,
Bella gerent alios.

Lady Fan. Here's some one coming ; keep my lord Count in your lodging till three in the morning. I will have a coach ready to carry you to be married.

Count. I beseech you, let me killè but one roqua.

Mrs. Fan. In, into the closet.

Count. But one, madam. Callè de Count de barber ?
Jerny bleu, vat is dis ?

Enter OLDWIT.

Oldw. Where is my most wise and subtile spouse, with her witty well-bred daughter ?

Lady Fan. What have you to do with wit or breeding ?

Oldw. Such counterfeit breeding and false wit as you, old doting fop, with the most affected and fantastic thing, your daughter, do possess, I utterly renounce.

Lady Fan. What says the antiquated wit, with his shreds of old poets ?

Mrs. Fan. Hélas ! You be de very fine judge indeed ! Ha, ha, ha.

Oldw. Judge ; ha, ha, ha ! Have a care of losing your English before you have gotten another language. But, do you hear ? In earnest, do you two think that you two have either wit or breeding ?

Mrs. Fan. Think ! We know we have ; and that you want both is too évident by your question.

Lady Fan. Yes, thou old lumber full of frippery, we have : while, Heaven knows, you have neither.

Oldw. Ounds ; what, I no wit !

Lady Fan. No.

Mrs. Fan. No.

Oldw. No, no ! Why, thou piece of clockwork, thou hast no teeth, no hair, no eyebrows, no complexion, but what cost thee money ; and but for iron bodice, art as crooked as a bugle-horn ; and I have made an enigram

She's bent like a ninepence ; and had been quite
broken,

Had not Nature intended the Devil a token :

Sure, Heaven in its indignation hath made her,

And in her man's crooked paunch neck and heels
laid her.

There's wit, old Sybil, for thee !

Lady Fan. That wit, you silly old fumbler ! You are
an opprobrium to the name of wit, thou ill-bred old sot.

Mrs. Fan. You 'a wit ! eh Gud ! The very spirit of
Grub Street reigns in you.

Oldw. Thou young Jezebel, with nothing natural
about thee ! Thou look'st as if thou wert painted by
some lewd painter for the sign of Folly, with such turning-
up of eyes, and screwing of faces, with convulsions in
your mouth.

She makes wry mouths, and chews every word,

Like an old sow, that simpereth with a new t——

You understand me. There's wit for you both now, you
brace of flirts ! I no wit, quoth they.

Mrs. Fan. If rudeness, railing, and ill-breeding may
pass for wit, you are plentifully endued ; but I despise
it.

Lady Fan. An old soaker, with a white head, a red
face, a brain clouded with fumes, and empty of wit, full
of whims and maggots.

Oldw. Come, come, you brace of fopdoodles, where's
your French barber you are both so fond of ; and you
are to marry, Mrs. Wit ? A pox on him ! if he could
marry you both, with all my heart.

Lady Fan. What, have you gotten that silly story too ?
Ha, ha !

Mrs. Fan. This is raised by some London wit, some

Lady Fan. and *Mrs. Fan.* A barber! Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Fan. Can we be deceived in quality and breeding?

Lady Fan. Not know a mechanic, a barber, from a noble Count! very likely. [*Both laugh.*]

Oldw. [*mocking them*]. Ha, ha, ha! You most abominable brace of conceited, affected fools! What a pox, my house will become ridiculous, the scorn and laughter of the whole country. Here are twenty people in town can prove he is a barber.

Lady Fan. Go, dotard, go: a barber! Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Fan. Oh, silly! A barber! Ha, ha, ha! *Mon Dieu!*

Oldw. Ounds! You make me mad, you most incorrigible pair of fools. Well, for once I'll take more care of you than you of yourself: I'll have this rogue barber if he be above ground, and make an example of him.

Enter WILDISH.

Here's one can tell you who your Count is.

Wild. Why, he is my peruke-maker, and he is a barber. I put him upon this frolic, thinking to make sport in the time of the Fair; but never thought it would have come to earnest.

Lady Fan. Ha, ha, ha! this is finely carried on indeed!

Mrs. Fan. Envy! Malice! Believe a London wit! a jeerer! a scoffer! a shammer! ha, ha, ha!

Oldw. Ounds! I'll have no more fooling about this business. Produce this barber; he came into my house, has not gone out since, and you must have hid him.

Mistress Fan. I hide a man in my apartment! I defy you, insolent.

Oldw. I'll see; is he not behind the bed, or in it? Ha. I cannot find him. He must be somewhere in

Lady Fan. What can provoke you to abuse my daughter thus?

Mrs. Fan. Must I, who have been admired (I may say adored) for virtue, have my reputation questioned thus by you?

Oldw. Are you angry to be kept from marrying a barber?

Lady Fan. How dare you domineer in my house thus?

Oldw. Stand by, old fool! Who is in this closet? Let me see. [*Breaks it open.*] Oh, sheep-biter, are you here?

Lady Fan. Oh Heaven, the Count here!

Mrs. Fan. *Mon Dieu!* How came you here?

Oldw. Come, Mr. Barber, instead of Monsieur le Count.

Count. Vat you mean? Begar, I vill have de satisfaction; and, vere it not for de reverence to de ladee, begar, me vould cut all your troat. *Morbleu!*

Wild. Why, sirrah rascal, are you not my barber and peruke-maker? Did I not set you up for a Count? Is not that my suit of clothes?

Count. Do not provoke me to runne you trough the bodee: me am amazè. *Ventre bleu!* Madam, dey be all starkè mad; dey dream, and dey talk in deir sleep. Jerny, me can no tell vat dey mean. Do dey treat de French Count in England dus? Oh, brutal!

Wild. If you dare persist in this business I will cut your throat infallibly.

Count. Lettè me alone. Begar, you no dare be hanga.

Mrs. Fan. Nay, then 'tis time to speak. Good Mr. Impudence, what have you to say to my husband?

Oldw. and *Wild.* Your husband!

Lady Fan. Yes, sir, her husband: so he is.

Count. Yes, vat you say to dis ladee's husban? Ha! *morbleu!*

Oldw. Oh, thou damnable betrayer of thy daughter! I

the pillory. You shall see your husband peep through wood, I warrant you. Come, sir, let's go.

[*Exeunt* WILDISH and OLDWIT.]

Mrs. Fan. He is gone with some wicked design or other; let us fly.

Count. Me vill do vat you pleas; but Monsieur le Count did never fly before.

Lady Fan. Come, haste and escape, while he's gone out.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mistress GERTRUDE and her Sister PHILADELPHIA, and Lord BELLAMY.

Phil. Had not my sister, against my will, surprised me with the sight of you, I ne'er had seen your eyes again, but had found out some melancholy hole, and died for shame.

Bell. I had been then completely miserable—she's excellently fair!

Phil. With what confusion must I look on you! I never shall behold you, but with a face covered with blushes.

Bell. The infinite honour you have done me o'erwhelms me with such shame, that, being conscious how little I deserve, I cannot bear it. But, madam, I will never rise from hence, 'till you have pardoned me for every command I had the impudence to lay upon you.

Phil. There is no colour for a pardon: I owe you all the thanks I am capable of expressing; and I can forgive all the world, but myself. I beseech your lordship, impute the rashness of my conduct to my madness; that madness which my father drove me to, who would have forced me to marry a fop I hated: you I had seen in public places often. What moved me to run to you, I know not; pray think the best.

Gert. Come, sister, comfort yourself; such things

compass: you differ from yourself so in this habit, you cannot be known to have worn the other.

Bell. It is so much to my advantage, that I will inquire no farther of the cause; but such it is, that makes me owe my life, and all I have to you; which I shall prostrate at your feet.

Phil. My kinswoman, my lady Loveland, had never assisted me in my rash design; but that, distracted I know not how, she thought I would have killed myself, had she not answered my desires.

Bell. A thousand blessings on her!

Phil. My lord, I beseech you, do me the right to believe, that I intended to have died ere you should have discovered me; for so, Heaven knows, I did.

Bell. That was unkindly designed, to lock up my chief happiness.

Gert. Here are some coming; pray retire quickly.

[BELLAMY and PHILADELPHIA retire.]

This is a happy turn! The house is in some uproar, whate'er's the matter?

Enter Lady FANTAST, Mrs. FANTAST, and four Ladies.

Lady Fan. 'Tis true; this damned Count is a barber! The barber in Cook Row knows him, and he has seen him often at London.

Mrs. Fan. I am undone for ever! lost! wretched! miserable! Oh me! I will hide my head within some hole, and ne'er be seen again.

Gert. How? what, this man of quality and breeding a barber!

Lady Fan. What's that to you, minx?

Gert. Could you mistake in quality and breeding?

Mrs. Fan. Oh, impertinente!

4th La. What, married to a barber!

Gert. How? Married!

Enter COUNT.

Mrs. Fan. Oh, I shall burst ! He is not my husband : I only said so, for fear my father-in-law and Wildish should have murdered him in their rage.

Count. Vat, you renouncè me ? Begar, me vill makè you know dat me am your husband.

Mrs. Fan. Avant, thou impudent fellow.

Gert. I could burst my spleen at this ; but I havè more serious business. [Exit.

Enter OLDWIT.

Count. Is all one, *morbleu*, if you no lettè me have your person, me vill havè your monee. *Teste bleu !*

Oldw. Say you so, sirrah ? I have confined you from flying, and have officers now to wait on you ; and I will have your ears, and have you whipped.

Count. Is all one for dat ; me vill losè de two eare, and be wippe two, tree, four time, for ten tousand pound ; and, begar, me vill havè de portion, do vat you vill.

Oldw. Enter. Here, take him away to jail.

[Officers enter and hale the COUNT away.]

3rd La. 'Tis no great matter ; she was a proud fantastic creature.

4th La. Nay, for my part, I am glad on't.

Enter TRIM and Sir HUMPHRY.

1st La. How sneakingly he looks ! He is but a pitiful fellow !

2nd La. He looks like a barber, methinks. Lord, that I should not discover it before !

3rd La. I think I was bewitched, for my part.

4th La. That I should ever take him to be a Count !

Trim. Madam, as in duty bound, I wish you happy in your choice.

Sir Hum. Madam, much joy to you and yours. [Exit.]

Mrs. Fan. I'll run away, and never see the face of man again. [*Exit.*

Lady Fan. Mr. Oldwit, farewell; let me have my coach. I'll never see Bury or you after this hour.

Oldw. Who waits there? Bring the coach and six horses to the door; and grooms, be ready instantly.

Lady Fan. Farewell for ever.

Oldw. We'll kiss at parting 'faith.

[*They kiss; she goes out in haste.*

Heaven be praised for this great deliverance: no more shall I be plagued with that damned wit and breeding!

Enter WILDISH.

Wild. What, on your knees?

Oldw. Ay, 'faith; and never had more reason in my life.

Enter Mistress GERTRUDE, conducting PHILADELPHIA and Lord BELLAMY in.

Gert. Pray, sir, down on your knees once more.

Oldw. Say'st thou so, my girl?

Gert. Do you know this face?

Oldw. My daughter! Oh Heaven! ten thousand welcomes! as many blessings on thy head! Rise, dear child. Where hast thou been? When didst thou come? Which way? I am overjoyed!

Gert. Ask no questions; 'tis no time to ask questions: here she is.

Oldw. Canst thou forgive me, child? I'll ne'er endeavour more to force thy inclinations: thou art free.

Phil. 'Tis I must ask your pardon, sir.

Oldw. Oh, name it not.

Bell. Now, sir, can you part with what you love so dearly? If so, I beg her on my knees.

Oldw. How's this? I am amazed! astonished! My

Bell. By love and fate, that govern everything. I loved this daughter, while she was lost to you and me ; and if she will accept of me, I have all I wish on earth.

Oldw. Have I my senses, my lord ?

Gert. Again asking questions ! Come, come, do the duty of a father, and bestow your daughter, when she has, like a free woman, chosen for herself.

Oldw. My head turns round ! But come, daughter : are you willing, Phil ?

Phil. Yes ; here I will obey. [Gives her hand.]

Oldw. All joy be with you ! I am not myself.

Wild. Joy to my friend. This is a happy turn !

Bell. I was passionate to marry the other sister, because I loved her ; but I think it more reasonable to marry this, because she loves me.

Oldw. Call all my servants ; lay down all my meat to the fire ; set all my hogsheads abroach ; call in the fiddlers ; let's revel for a month at least.

Enter Servants.

Wild. Hold, hold, sir, a little ! Madam, madam !

[Pulls GERTRUDE by the sleeve.]

Gert. Have you anything to say to me ?

Wild. Can you find in your heart to dispose of your sister to my friend, and not of yourself to me ?

Gert. Time enough to think on that after I have tamed you, and brought you up to hand. You are too wild for me, a great deal.

Oldw. Come, daughter, let me persuade you ; let it be a general night of joy.

Gert. I think I had as good. He is the most importunate lover ; I shall never be quiet for him. Well, I will dissemble no longer ; here's my hand.

Wild. And here's my heart, which you shall ever

I can obey, as well as e'er a meek, simpering milksop of 'em all; and have ever held non-resistance a doctrine fit for all wives, though for nobody else.

Oldw. Call in the fiddlers. I am transported! I am all air! Sirrah, go you, and set the bells a going in ~~the~~ arches. Call in all my neighbours; I'll have changed that's sober to-night. Let every room in my house roar, that it may keep the whole town awake. Here are the fiddles; fall to dancing presently; lose no time.

Let all this night be spent in mirth and wine; [*Dance.*
Let's lose no part of it in beastly sleep.

This is the happiest day of all my life;

I've found my daughter, and have lost my wife.





SPOKEN BY MRS. MOUNTFORD.

I was our author's advocate last year,
And then ye very gentle did appear.
To him ye now should more indulgence show ;
Eight months he has been sick, and well we know
How very little a sick man can do.
But could he write with never so much wit,
He must despair of seeing a full pit :
Most of our constant friends have left the town,
Bravely to serve their king and country gone.
Our unfrequented theatre must mourn,
'Till the brave youths triumphantly return.
Soft men of Peace enough are left at home,
Daily to cram our house, if they'd but come :
They eagerly elsewhere in throngs resort,
Crowding for places in the well-filled Court.
Here one, who has been fifty years a knave,
Strives for a place, with one foot in the grave ;
Another there, who did whate'er he could
Against the sovereign author of our good.
Some, who rode westward at least ten miles down,
Some made blue coats at him, and stayed in town.
All these would have preferment, as if they
Had to this glorious change prepared the way :
Thus there are more admirers to each place,
Than e'er a celebrated poet had.

And they, who cannot that advancement gain
They think their mighty merits ought t' attain,
Steal to some grumbling club, and there complain.
Pox on 't! Things go not well; I'll change my side:
I thought they would for my great worth provide.
Pray have less vanity, and learn more wit;
Come here, we've places for you all most fit,
Within our empty boxes and our pit.
But you, who use to hiss, pray keep away,
And try to write before you damn a play;
'Twill then so hard a task to you appear
You will not have the heart to be severe.



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